BAPTIST INFORMER

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Faith In The God We Serve

By Dr. Charles Bullock
President GBSC

"Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous hand" (Isaiah 41:10 NKJV).

We welcome aboard our newly elected Executive Secretary Treasurer, the Reverend Haywood Gray. He brings to this position new hope, new inspiration and a zeal to lead us to new heights. We are excited about what God will do through his leadership.

Dr. Charles **Bullock**

By the goodness of God, we have entered into a new year. The old year has rolled into eternity and we have been given the blessed opportunity to cross the portal into another year. As we continue our journey in this year, we do so with the assurance that our God waits to make us victorious where we would be defeated, strong where we would be weak, hopeful where we would be fearful and holy where we would be sinful.

As General Baptists and the people of God we embrace faith and not fear. For faith and fear are not good companions. One writer has said that "fear is the child of doubt, and faith is born of God. Fear ends in failure – faith leads to victory." To have a year without fear, we claim a year of ever increasing faith in Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we could ask or think.

Traditionally, many enter the New Year with new resolutions. We do not know what the untrodden way holds for us, whether there will be joys or sorrows, happiness or sadness. However, with hope and faith, we face the unknown future trusting God who has blessed us and guided us in the past. We are confident that He will continue to bless us and guide us in the days to come. We do not see the distance scene, but let us be guided by the words of Solomon as recorded in the book of Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all of your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths." (NKJV.) Realizing that the journey into the future will have to be taken one step at a time, one day at a time, we shall trust God's divine guidance, for His love and wisdom have already planned our course. Our steps will be ordered in the promises of His word. One such promise as recorded in the book of Isaiah, "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10 NKJV).

Customarily we wish each other a prosperous new year. I believe it will be helpful to remind ourselves that real prosperity cannot be measured in accomplishments or material possessions alone. We realize that God is the giver of "every good and perfect gift" including His peace, companionship, help and strength.

As we examine the verse of scripture for Isaiah, there are two negatives that we should guard against. *"Fear thou not, ... be not dismayed."* Fear and dismay! These are the hidden negatives that will prevent us from putting our trust and confidence in God. As we plan to move forward into the future, let us not look back and focus on past failures. That will cause us to be fearful and will add to our dismay. We acknowledge our past failures, but refuse to dwell on them. If we have fervently taken them to the Lord in prayer, then let us leave them there.

To look within will also add to our dismay. "Lean not to your own understanding," for it is harmful to our faith. Looking within sometimes can be depressing, unless there is divine examination of self. As we move forward into the future the best way for us to look is to look up, not around, nor behind, nor within, but up to Him who is all-powerful. Look up, He will lead us into paths unknown, look up, for He will direct our path. Look up, He will lead us into deeper experiences of His love and power. He will sustain us with His peace amidst any and all storms that we may encounter. During this New Year, let us look up – for our salvation is nearer at hand than when we first believed.

Just as there are two negatives (two not's) in the verse of scripture quoted above, there are two positives, (two I am's) "I am with you....I am your God;" which means with God's presence and God's power, we can move forward and face the days ahead and live a life without fear and without dismay. We admit that on this restless sea of time life may become lonely when loved ones have departed, burdens may get heavy in the midst of trials and tribulations, but we can put our trust in God, for He promises never to leave us, never to leave us alone. The hymnologist penned ***"I have seen the lightning flashing, and heard the thunder roll, I felt sin's breakers dashing, which tried to conquer my soul; I've heard the voice of my Savior, He bids me still fight on – He promised never to leave me, never to leave me alone."***

The psalmist adds assurance "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." As we reflect on the history of the General Baptist State Convention, we can truthfully say that God has been our refuge and our strength. When there were dark days in the past and the future seemed dismal, God preserved and guided us through the difficult times and caused us to rise above those difficulties. Knowing that God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble, we can continue our journey in this New Year with faith, confidence and boldness, knowing that God's infinite resources will be at our disposal. As needs arise, He will help us meet them. As enemies appear, He will help conquer them. As clouds gather, He will help disperse them. We count on each of you to be used of God in this regard.

In the latter part of Isaiah 41:10 there is a threefold promise. "I will strengthen you – I will help you – I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." With this trinity of a promise, it should expel all fears and dismay. With this promise, we have the assurance that we will be upheld by the hand that formed and upholds the world in its grasp – the hand that is full of righteousness in dispensing of rewards and punishment. The Bible presents the right hand as the place of power and the position of highest honor. The right hand upholding us, suggests that we are supported by the omnipotent God. When God's right hand is holding our right hand we have no reason to fear or be dismayed!

Join me as we embrace, welcome aboard and support the leadership that God has given us in Executive Secretary Treasurer Gray. We have faith that the God we serve will bless each of us to be more spiritually alive in 2005!

Happy and Blessed New Year! ■

The Only Source of Confidence for the New Year (I John 5:14-15)

Dr. Terry Thomas,
Editor

Greetings and a blessed New Year to all the subscribers and readers of the Baptist Informer. I am so grateful to God for the privilege of sharing a value with you that I strongly believe is extremely important to having a prosperous New Year. The value I want to share is confidence.

Dr. Terry **Thomas**

In my encounters with people across this land and other parts of the world, I have yet to meet an extremely successful person who was not draped with confidence. The late Dr. Samuel Dewitt Proctor in his book, ***The Substance of Things Hoped For***, tells of his initial encounter with the late Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., while Dr. King was a student at Crozer Theological Seminary, that to a degree bonafides my claim. Dr. Proctor wrote of that encounter, and I quote, **"It was immediately clear to me I was talking to a prodigious candidate for leadership. He looked like a major event about to happen."** There is no doubt that Dr. King was a man clothed with confidence.

In addition to the fruit of the Spirit, confidence is an attribute of the people of God. From Genesis to Revelation, it is clearly shown that confidence is one of the distinguishably profound attributes of the people of God. Remember when David went to King Saul to ask Saul for permission to fight Goliath? David convinced Saul with these words, **"The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine"** (I Samuel 17:37). That's confidence. You recall when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego refused to bow down and worship the golden image setup by King Nebuchadnezzar, and it had been decreed that those who did not worship the golden image were to be thrown in the fiery furnace? Well, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego said to King Nebuchadnezzar, **"we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up"**(Daniel 3:16-18). My friends, that is the voice of confidence.

I am quite sure that this is not a surprise, but the scripture repeatedly reiterates the confidence of the people of God. Listen to a few of them: (1) when God is for you who can be against you; (2) though a host should encamp against me my heart shall not fear; (3) the Lord is at my right hand and I shall not be moved; (4) we are more than conquerors; (5) I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. You would have to agree with me that the author and finisher of our faith, Jesus Christ, epitomized confidence. Of himself, Jesus said, I am the light of the world, the bread of life, the living water, the resurrection, the good shepherd, the first and the last, Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, and I am the way, the truth and the life. Jesus was a person endorsed with confidence.

I felt the need to share with us the importance of confidence because of the many unknowns that lie ahead for us in the New Year. With so many unknowns that lie ahead of us, a successful voyage through the New Year necessitates that we be draped with confidence. The word confidence comes from the Latin word **con-fidere**, which means to have full trust. Our success in the New Year is largely determined by that to which we will give or have given our full trust, the source of our confidence.

The writer of the First Epistle of John reminds us that the source of the believer's confidence is in God. John's entire objective in the epistle I John is certainty. John wrote this epistle so that we might know. Can you imagine the confidence that you gain to reach-out, to stretch-out, to embrace the impossible, and journey into the unknown when you know? How else can you explain the determination of African-American people during the Civil Rights Movement? In spite of being only 10% of the population, brutally beaten, hosed, bitten by dogs, bombed, and gunned down, they still looked their deterrence, detractors and demons straight in their eyes and said, **"I ain't going to let nobody turn me around. I am going to keep on walking, keep on marching, walking up King's Highway."** Their confidence was fueled with a belief that God was on their side. People who have God as the source of their confidence never seem to be intimidated by new adventures and difficult challenges. Nevertheless, for God to become the source of our confidence, there are three things we need to consider.

I. The Source of Our Confidence in God Is Sanction in the Will of God.

When we speak of the will of God, we are actually taking about God's desire, God's pleasure. So the question we must ponder is, "What is God's desire for my life?" I say that, ultimately, God's desire for our lives is the manifestation of his glory upon our lives, which includes good things being bestowed upon our lives. Psalm 84:11 tells us that **For the Lord is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk up rightly.** Confidence needed to embrace the New Year, is a confidence whose source lies in the will of God.

II. We Have to Know God's will.

To have the confidence that what we ask of God, God will do, we must first know the will of God. Many times our prayers are not answered according to the outcome we have formulated in our minds because the content of our prayers is not shaped by the will of God. The confidence of the people of God is built by the Word of God. The air that inflates our confidence is the Word of God. Our mind is constantly being shaped by what God has said. Our hope is standing on what God has said. Our boldness is fueled by what God has said. Our thoughts for thinking what we can do is based upon what God has said. Therefore, to have the confidence that John is talking about embracing, we must know the will of God.

III. The Content of God's Will Is a Sure Thing.

Whatever we ask, if it is in accordance to God's will, it is a sure thing. It is a sure thing because it is based upon the personification of God. Jesus said in John 15:7, **"if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."** It is a sure thing because God is. I must admit there are something things that I am not quite sure about. I am not quite sure what lies ahead in 2005. However, I am sure that God is real for I can feel God within my soul. Subsequently, that gives me the confidence to journey into the unknown, the confidence to stand alone, the confidence do in spite of what the critics say cannot be done.

In a watch night service in 1999, a testimony was shared by a young lady who was home from school for the holidays that I will never forget. She testified how her mother had made unbelievable sacrifices for her to attend school. She was getting ready to go back to school in January, but she needed $2,000 dollars in order to return back to school. She stated that she did not know where they were going to get the money for her to return to school. But then she said something that touched me. She said, with tears falling freely from her eyes, that her mamma told her that she was going to get it. Therefore, if mamma said it, I know that she is going to do it. So I am not going to worry.

What the young lady said is a small mirror reflection of how we ought to have confidence in God. We may not know how it is going to happen. We may not know how it is going to come about. We may not know how it will be derived. But if God has said it, that should be enough to have the confidence to believe it. The scripture has declared, "if you confess with your mouth and believe in your heart thou shall be saved." Why not trust that word? The hymn writer wrote, "It is so sweet to trust in Jesus just to take him at his word. Just to rest upon his promise. Just to know thus saith the Lord. Jesus, Jesus oh how I trust him! How I've proved Him o'rer and o'rer! Jesus, Jesus precious! O grace to trust him more." ■

THE BAPTIST INFORMER
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THEME: *"By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness..."* (II Corinthians 6:7)

Conflict of Interest Policy, Board Meeting Schedule

By Dr. John H. Grant
Vice President At Large

In anticipation of our upcoming meetings that will focus on board orientation and self-assessment, it may be helpful for General Board members to reflect on the Conflict of Interest policy below. The recent actions of certain General Board members, as reported by Convention Trustees in our January 7, 2005 meeting, illustrate in dramatic fashion why every board of directors needs to adopt a Conflict of Interest policy. The purpose of such a policy is to prevent the personal interests of board members from interfering with the performance of their duties to the Convention, or resulting in personal financial, professional, and/or political gain at the expense of the Convention or its member churches.

Dr. John H. **Grant**

Conflict of Interest (also Conflict) means a conflict, or the appearance of a conflict between the private interests and official responsibilities of a person in a position of trust. A Convention General Board member holds a position of trust. Real or perceived (the appearance of) conflicts must be voided, since they can cause significant damage to the Convention's reputation and well-being. Some of the clearest and most serious conflicts of interest occur

- When a board member receives an inappropriate financial gain resulting from association with the organization. This type of conflict is known as *private inurement*. Examples include a board member renting space that he or she owns to the organization at more than fair market value.
- When a board member is involved with a competing organization, either for profit or nonprofit. It is a clear breach of fiduciary responsibility for a board member to promote the competing interest of such an organization, or to intentionally or accidentally convey confidential information to such an organization. If a situation presents the possibility that this might occur, the board member should resign from the General Board.

1. I shall identify areas of potential conflict and avoid any areas of impropriety, including making full disclosure of any potential conflict of interest, and adhering to this Conflict of Interest Statement by abstaining and physically removing myself from any and all discussions where such a conflict may arise.

2. I shall understand that confidentiality with respect to all aspects of the Convention's actions, the actions of the General Board and the actions of the staff, are necessary components for efficient and productive operation of the goals and objectives of the Convention; and further, that I shall refrain from any actions which may lead to the dissemination of such internal information, including but not limited to, seeking advice from a trusted colleague, gossip and the misplacement of board material.

3. I shall not accept any employment, perform any consulting duties, or engage in any activities (whether paid or unpaid) which conflict with the business interests of the Convention.

4. I understand that in the event the Convention has incurred costs or attorney fees as a result of legal action, litigation, or appeal brought by or on my behalf due to a conflict of interest and consequent sanctions and in the event that the Convention prevails in such legal action, litigation, or appeal, the Convention shall be entitled to recover all of its costs and attorney fees from me.

5. I understand that this Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Statement is a condition of my board position with the Convention, and that failure to comply with the same shall be just cause for sanctions or disciplinary action by the board, including but not limited to my termination/dismissal as a board member of the Convention.

A copy of this policy shall be given to all General Board members at the time of their selection whereupon they shall sign and date the policy and also each year thereafter. Failure to sign does not nullify the policy.

Please note that the following General Board meeting schedule is subject to change. Members will receive written notice of any changes in the Baptist Informer and by letter from the Chairman.

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Date	Time	Place
January 7, 2005	11 a.m.	Sheraton Capital Central Hotel
March 24, 2005	10 a.m.	Lewis Chapel Baptist, Fayetteville, NC
April 21, 2005	10 a.m.	Goldsboro, NC
May 2, 2005	1 p.m.	St. Stephens Baptist, Elizabeth City, NC
June 23, 2005	10 a.m.	Mt. Zion Baptist, Asheville, NC
July 21, 2005	10 a.m.	Friendship Baptist, Charlotte, NC
September 22, 2005	10 a.m.	Mount Zion First, Rocky Mount, NC

Second Vice-President

By Rev. Nilous M. Avery, II - M. Div.
2nd Vice-President

"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." (Galatians 1:3-5, NIV.)

Rev. Nilous **Avery, II**

The New Year provides opportunities for new commitments, new goals, new objectives, new lessons, new experiences, and new challenges. The Christian community must be equipped and empowered to face these opportunities with renewed energy, enthusiasm, excitement, and enlightenment.

The Christian life involves a vertical line from the believer to God, and a horizontal line from the believer to others. The writer in 2 Corinthians 9:8 penned it this way: *"God can bless you with everything you need, and you will always have more than enough to do all kinds of good things for others."* (CEV) Our profession must be matched by our performance. Our "up-reach" must be partnered with our outreach. Our claim of inner grace must be interlocked with our outward show of goodness toward others.

Beloved, let us faithfully pledge and fulfill our spiritual and financial support to the General Baptist State Convention. Our time, talents, treasures, and prayers are needed, encouraged and welcomed. The convention and the local ministries we serve are gifts from God that God has entrusted us with as faithful stewards.

The harvest is ripe for a prophetic ministry that preaches good news, and proclaims freedom, restoration, release, and the year of the Lord's favor (from Isaiah 61:1-2 & Luke 4:18-19). God's peace be with you all for a joyous, fruitful, and Holy Spirit-filled New Year. ***TO GOD BE THE GLORY*** and ***"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all"*** (2 Corinthians 13:14, NIV). ■

The Prayer Line

Rev. David K. Miles M.Div.
919-264-9249 9pm - 7am

The Fruit Of Our Thoughts

By Executive Secretary-Treasurer Brodie

Dr. Julias **McDonald**

Dr. Priscilla **Brodie**

Now that we have come through another year and entered the New Year, what thoughts did we bring, what thoughts are we thinking, and what thoughts will we think? What thoughts have we of God (Jesus), of ourselves, and of others? The Word tells us that as one thinks in his heart so is he. Do we bring carnal thoughts which will manifest themselves in works of the flesh, given in Galatians 5:19-21? Or do we bring spiritual thoughts which are controlled by the fruit of the Spirit as given in Galatians 5:22-25?

How we serve, in this New Year, the present age and transform the family through Christian evangelism will depend greatly on thoughts, whether they be righteous or unrighteous. For certainly our thoughts will result in fruit.

In this New Year, if there are winds of not so good a thought(s), let us pray that God create in us a clean heart and cause us to love Him with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind and our neighbor as ourselves. In this New Year, let us pray that God enable and cause us to think on things that are true, things that are honest, things that are just, things that are pure, things that are lovely, and things of good report.

For "The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk properly, as in the day, not revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provisions for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts" – Romans 13:12-14, NKJV.

In this New Year what will be the fruit of our thoughts as a missionary organization for Christ? Will it bring honor, glory to His name? Will we seek the Mind of Christ for the Convention and implement the same during this New Year?

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

REMINDERS

Committees who desire to meet may meet Saturday, January 8th, 2005, from 8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. in the arena.

Please notice the **calendar of events** for 2005.

Persons who desire to be considered for **Youth Bible Camp – 2005** counselors/junior counselors, please contact the office at (919) 833-4823 for an application now.

Please participate with our **Nehemiah Prayer Warriors Fellowship** in observing a prayer vigil every day during this New Year for the spiritual and general welfare of the Woman's Convention, along with GBSC. Please contact the office for a brochure and enrollment form.

Please contact our office for certified workers to lead **Institutes/Workshops** pertaining to missionary education for all local churches, missionary county unions, and other interested persons. We now have a structured curriculum for study.

Study Books for this year's study are available – please contact the office for information.

The 2004-2005 budget is in the amount of $819,055.00 which will be distributed among the objectives: State Missions - $578,154.00; Foreign Missions - $80,901.00; Shaw University - $49,500.00; Shaw Divinity School - $33,500.00; Central Children's Home - $36,500.00; and Baptist Assembly - $40,500.00. Check and money orders should be made payable to the Woman's Baptist State Convention & Woman's Baptist Home & Foreign Missionary Convention, P. O. Box 1818, Raleigh, NC 27602. PLEASE BE REMINDED THAT THE WOMAN'S CONVENTION'S FUNDS ARE NOT A PART OF THE UNIFIED PLAN. ■

BAPTIST INFORMER

Advertising Rates and Specifications

Non-profit or church ad rates	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
Full page	$350.00	$875.00	$1650.00	$3000.00
Half page	$200.00	$525.00	$ 900.00	$1500.00
Quarter page	$125.00	$300.00	$ 475.00	$ 800.00
Eighth page	$ 80.00	$195.00	$ 325.00	$ 540.00

For profit company ad rates	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	12 Months
Full page	$500.00	$1275.00	$2250.00	$3900.00
Half page	$325.00	$ 825.00	$1350.00	$2100.00
Quarter page	$200.00	$ 510.00	$ 900.00	$1500.00
Eighth page	$150.00	$ 375.00	$ 600.00	$ 900.00

Preprint / Inserts:
1 to 4 pages - $48.00/thousand
6 to 8 pages - $80.00/thousand
10 to 12 pages - $100.00/thousand

Production charges
Layout 10% of cost of ad
Color $150.00 (black and 1 color)
$250.00 (black and 2 colors)
$500.00 (full color)

Ad specifications

Full page	10.5"x 12.5"
Half page	10.5" x 6.25"
Quarter page	5.25" x 6.25"
Eighth page	5.25" x 3.125"

Insertion orders are due the 10th of the month prior to the month ad is to run. They should be faxed to Portia Brandon (919) 831-1526.

For more information call Portia Brandon at (919) 821-7466

The Nehemiah Prayer Chain

of the
Woman's Baptist Home & Foreign Missionary Convention
North Carolina, Auxiliary to GBSC

Enlistment Form

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight. (Proverbs 15:8)

Confess your faults to one another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)

Name_____
(Organization or Individual)

Mailing Address_____

_____

Telephone Number_____

E-Mail_____

District_____ Group_____

Department_____
(Senior, Young, Adult, or Youth)

Chairperson - Mr. Robbie Diggs *Co-Chairperson* - Mrs. Colene Stanley

(Please return to the Office within seven (7) days)
Woman's State Baptist Convention

The History of Martin Luther King Day

Submitted By Portia Brandon, M.Div.
Christian Education Coordinator

It took 15 years to create the federal Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday.

Portia **Brandon**

Congressman John Conyers, Democrat from Michigan, first introduced legislation for a commemorative holiday four days after King was assassinated in 1968. After the bill became stalled, petitions endorsing the holiday containing six million names were submitted to Congress.

Conyers and Rep. Shirley Chisholm, Democrat of New York, submitted King holiday legislation each subsequent legislative session. Public pressure for the holiday mounted during the 1982 and 1983 civil rights marches in Washington.

Congress passed the holiday legislation in 1983, which was then signed into law by President Ronald Reagan. A compromise moving the holiday from January 15, King's birthday, which was considered too close to Christmas and New Year's, to the third Monday in January helped overcome opposition to the law.

National Consensus on the Holiday

A number of states resisted celebrating the holiday. Some opponents said King did not deserve his own holiday – contending that the entire civil rights movement rather than one individual, however instrumental, should be honored. Several southern states include celebrations for various Confederate generals on that day, while Utah calls it Human Rights Day. Legislation is now pending to change the name to Martin Luther King Day. Arizona voters approved the holiday in 1992 after a threatened tourist boycott. In 1999, New Hampshire changed the name of Civil Rights Day to Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

Timeline of Events in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Life

1929: Born at noon on January 15, 1929. Parents: The Reverend and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Sr. Home: 501 Auburn Avenue, N.E., Atlanta, Georgia.

1944: Graduated from Booker T. Washington High School and was admitted to Morehouse College at the age of 15.

1948: Graduates from Morehouse College and enters Crozer Theological Seminary. Ordained to the Baptist ministry, February 25, 1948, at the age of 19.

1951: Enters Boston University for graduate studies.

1953: Marries Coretta Scott and settles in Montgomery, Alabama.

1955: Received Doctorate of Philosophy in Systematic Theology from Boston University, Boston, Massachusetts on June 5, 1955. Dissertation Title: *A Comparison of God in the Thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Wiseman.*

Joins the bus boycott after Rosa Parks was arrested on December 1. On December 5, he is elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association, making him the official spokesman for the boycott.

1956: On November 13, the Supreme Court rules that bus segregation is illegal, ensuring victory for the boycott.

1957: King forms the Southern Christian Leadership Conference to fight segregation and achieve civil rights. On May 17, Dr. King speaks to a crowd of 15,000 in Washington, D. C.

1958: The U. S. Congress passed the first Civil Rights Act since restoration. King's first book, *Stride Toward Freedom*, is published. On a speaking tour, Martin Luther King, Jr. is nearly killed when stabbed by an assailant in Harlem. Met with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, along with Roy Wilkins, A. Philip Randolph, and Lester Grange on problems affecting black Americans.

1959: Visited India to study Mohandas Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence. Resigns from pastoring the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church to concentrate on civil rights full time. He moved to direct the activities of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

1960: Becomes co-pastor with his father at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia. Lunch counter sit-ins began in Greensboro, North Carolina. In Atlanta, King is arrested during a sit-in waiting to be served at a restaurant. He is sentenced to four months in jail, but after intervention by John Kennedy and Robert Kennedy, he is released. Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee founded to coordinate protests at Shaw University, Raleigh, North Carolina.

1961: In November, the Interstate Commerce Commission bans segregation in interstate travel due to work of Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Freedom Riders. Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) began first *Freedom Ride* through the South, in a Greyhound bus, after the U.S. Supreme Court outlawed segregation in interstate transportation.

1962: During the unsuccessful Albany, Georgia movement, King is arrested on July 27 and jailed.

1963: On Good Friday, April 12, King is arrested with Ralph Abernathy by Police Commissioner Eugene "Bull" Connor for demonstrating without a permit. On April 13, the Birmingham campaign is launched. This would prove to be the turning point in the war to end desegregation in the South. During the eleven days he spent in jail, MLK writes his famous Letter from Birmingham Jail. On May 10, the Birmingham agreement is announced. The stores, restaurants, and schools will be desegregated, hiring of blacks implemented, and charges dropped.

On June 23, MLK leads 125,000 people on a Freedom Walk in Detroit. The March on Washington held August 28 is the largest civil rights demonstration in history with nearly 250,000 people in attendance. At the march, King makes his famous *I Have a Dream* speech. On November 22, President Kennedy is assassinated.

1964: On January 3, King appears on the cover of *Time* magazine as its Man of the Year.

King attends the signing ceremony of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 at the White House on July 2. During the summer, King experiences his first hurtful rejection by black people when he is stoned by Black Muslims in Harlem. King is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize on December 10. Dr. King is the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for Peace at age 35.

1965: On February 2, King is arrested in Selma, Alabama during a voting rights demonstration. After President Johnson signs the Voting Rights Act into law, Martin Luther King, Jr. turns to socioeconomic problems.

1966: On January 22, King moves into a Chicago slum tenement to attract attention to the living conditions of the poor. In June, King and others begin the March

Against Fear through the South. On July 10, King initiates a campaign to end discrimination in housing, employment, and schools in Chicago.

1967: The Supreme Court upholds a conviction of MLK by a Birmingham court for demonstrating without a permit. King spends four days in Birmingham jail. On November 27, King announces the inception of the Poor People's Campaign focusing on jobs and freedom for the poor of all races.

1968: King announces that the Poor People's Campaign will culminate in a March on Washington demanding a $12 billion Economic Bill of Rights guaranteeing employment to the able-bodied, incomes to those unable to work, and an end to housing discrimination. Dr. King marches in support of sanitation workers on strike in Memphis, Tennessee. On March 28, King leads a march that turns violent. This was the first time one of his events had turned violent. Delivered *I've Been to the Mountaintop* speech. At sunset on April 4, Martin Luther King, Jr. is fatally shot while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee. There are riots and disturbances in 120 American cities.

There were twenty thousand arrests. King's funeral on April 19 is an international event. Within a week of the assassination, the Open Housing Act is passed by Congress.

(LSU Libraries - Mitchell Brown Compiler) ■

AIDS remains as one of the greatest health threats to the Black community. National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness Day (NBHAAD) is a community mobilization initiative designed to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS among African Americans, and to increase access to, and utilization of HIV/AIDS prevention services.

NBHAAD is a community mobilization initiative that emphasizes the importance of building effective leadership for HIV/AIDS prevention among African Americans.

The Community Capacity Building Coalition (CCBC) established NBHAAD in 2001. The CCBC is comprised of CDC funded capacity building assistance (CBA) organizations funded through the national Minority HIV/AIDS Initiative. Next year's observance of NBHAAD takes place on February 7, 2005.

For more information on NBHAAD, please visit the website: www.blackaidsday.org or call 919-733-9568. ■

National Black HIV/AIDS Awareness & Information Day

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Thought For The Month: "The Full Life"

By Reverend Ricky L. Banks, Fourth Vice President

Scripture For The Month:
Ephesians 3:13
Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Nothing in nature reaches its perfection suddenly. The blade comes before the full corn in the ear; the acorn by slow degrees of maturity in form becomes the mighty oak; and the child becomes an adult only after years of growth. The new day does not suddenly burst upon the earth. First, a very faint light appears far away in the eastern sky – then it spreads gently and slowly, wider and wider in extent; higher and higher into the heavens it rises, until all things of earth awake in beauty and loveliness.

Likewise a full Christian experience is not attained all at once. We begin as babes in Christ, and from that time on, healthy growth is the only way by which we can enter into God's plan for our lives. Gradually and steadily, as the powers of the new life unfold and develop, we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord, Christ Jesus; every day we must have the light of the Divine Presence.

In this heavenly light we shall come to "the stature of the fulness of Christ." Surely our lives will then attract others unto Him who once said, "I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

We take this time to thank you for including our Children's Home in your 2005 budget. With the Lord's help, along with your prayers and support we will have a great year. We have a project called "Friends of The Children's Home", a program for long time donors, to continue their loyal support for the Home. The site visit has been completed for the accreditation process, so we patiently await the results. The Genesis Academy is still going great and is a blessing to our Home. Thanks so much for your support and God bless you one and all. Call me at (252) 335-5003 or (252) 339-3438. ■

Rev. Ricky **Banks**

After a Splendid Enterprise

By Dr. Jasper P. Reed, Historian, GBSC

When "A Splendid Enterprise" brought to closure the first one hundred plus years in the life of the General Baptist State Convention and its attendant auxiliaries our history did not cease. Especially is this true for the Woman's Baptist Home & Foreign Missionary Convention of North Carolina, Inc. The founding purpose of the WBH&FMC is of a perpetual nature. There is always a need to organize and improve missionary activities in Baptist Churches across North Carolina, the Nation and the World.

Embedded in the final WBH&FMC described by "A Splendid Enterprise" was a servant of God poised to take it to the next level in its growth in the person of Dr. Shirley W. Bullock. Dr. Bullock had been positioned by the Lord as first vice-president to lead this dedicated body to do a greater service for the kingdom. Psalm 37:34a, (TEV) "put your hope in the Lord and obey His commands; He will honor you by giving you the land." So this prepared servant, who is a native of Oxford, North Carolina, graduated from North Carolina Central University, Durham, NC with a B.S. degree, from East Carolina University, Greenville, NC with a Master of Education degree, and earned an Administrative Certification from North Carolina State University, Raleigh, NC. Subsequently she was awarded a Doctor of Humane Letters degree from Shaw University, Raleigh, NC.

Dr. Shirley Bullock was and still is an accomplished educator. She rose through the ranks from a High School Classroom Teacher with honors to become a Department Chairperson, to a Vocational Counselor and Director of Vocational and Technical Education Programs in the Rocky Mount City Schools. She served the State of North Carolina as a Vocational Administrator in the State Department of Public Instruction as well as Officer for the North Carolina Council of Local Vocational Administrators.

Dr. Bullock, blessed with an abundant supply of energy, was able to serve in other capacities. She provided leadership for the Wake County Board of Education, served the Wake Forest University Poteat Scholarship Selection Committee. Currently she serves as a member of the North Carolina Internship Council – appointed by Governor Easley. She is recipient of the Governor's State of North Carolina Long Leaf Pine Award, which is the highest State Award given to civilians. Dr. Bullock epitomizes a life dedicated to the Lord and she can see how He, the Lord, honors her and gives her the land or abundance of her endeavors.

These seem to be enough to fill a life time for most persons but not for our subject. She has found time and energy to do more. She taught and still teaches for the member churches of the General Baptist State Convention, the Woman's Baptist Home and Foreign Missionary Convention, and the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Missionary Convention. She served the WBH&FMC as its State President. Beyond this she served Shaw University as a member of its Board of Trustees. Dr. Bullock is a consummate traveler. She has traveled extensively in the United States of America, Canada, the African Continent, Central and South America, Europe to include the British Isles, and Israel on three different occasions.

She also found time to raise four children, be a wife to a Pastor, and now to the President of the General Baptist State Convention of NC, Inc. This is truly a dedicated soul to Kingdom's work. Among many "ONE". ■

Dr. Jasper **Reed**

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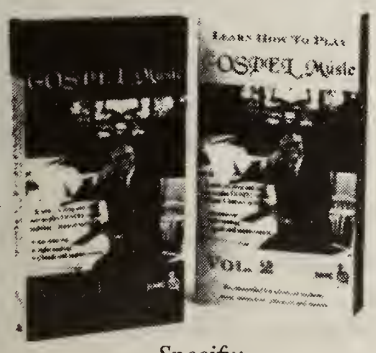

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Picture Me Tobacco Free Photovoice Project

By Dr. Clifton Bell, Jr.,
PMTF Facilitator and
GBSC Laymen's League PMTF Liaison

Greater St John Missionary Baptist Church in Asheboro, North Carolina was one of the first churches to become a part of the Picture Me Tobacco Free Photovoice Project sponsored by the Center for Health and Healing, an affiliated non-profit entity of the General Baptist State Convention of NC, and funded by the NC Health and Wellness Trust Fund. This project is part of a three year statewide campaign to help prevent North Carolina teens from using tobacco products. Youth between the ages of 11 and 16 are recruited and trained to serve as holistic health advocates within their local churches and communities.

Dr. Anita **Holmes**

One of the tasks that the Youth Action Team (YAT) had to perform was writing an action plan related to youth tobacco prevention or cessation. The YAT of Greater St. John chose to do several Action Plans. One of those was to write a NO SMOKING POLICY for their church. The YAT felt that this was important because others should role model positive behavior for youth and smoking, especially on church grounds, is not a positive behavior. The YAT met and wrote the plan with some guidelines and assistance from their Adult Advisors, Rev. George McCormick and Bro. Clifton E. Bell, Jr. After a draft of the plan was written, it was taken to the Pastor, Rev. Joseph F. Kearns, Sr. Following discussions with the Pastor and Adult Advisors and revisions to the draft, a final copy was written and presented to Rev. Kearns.

We are happy to report that the Smoking Policy was presented to the congregation at the June church conference, voted on, and approved by the membership. At that time, the youth wanted to design a No Smoking sign to be placed outside in the parking lot. The Advisors met with the pastor an informed him of the youths' request. He was "elated" (at the least) with this idea. After the youth received permission to do the signs, each member of the them (Walter Rush, Tavia McCormick, Phillip Cheek, II, Brittany Coble, and Adrianna Bowden) was asked to draw four signs each. After the submission of the drawings, the Advisors met with Rev. Kearns to decide on a design. The Adult Advisors took the best drawing of each youth and combined elements of them to come up with the best design. That design was sent out to be produced. Everyone is pleased with the resulting signage. The signage will be placed in several visible locations in the parking lot.

On November 13th, 2004, "PICTURE ME TOBACCO FREE" sponsored a Health Awareness Day at New Hope Baptist Church in Greensboro, North Carolina. During this forum, the new sign was presented as part of Greater St. John Missionary Baptist Church's YAT presentation. It was well received by others in attendance. A representative of Guilford County Health Department offered to work with Greensboro churches to produce duplicate signs at no cost to the churhces.

A hearty well done to the YAT, their advisors, and Rev. Kearns for all of the support and hard work that made this Action Plan a success.

For more information on the project and developing a No Smoking Policy for your church, contact the Project Coordinator, Toshia Davis, at (919)572-6374, Ext. 2 or toshia_davis@c4hh.org. ■

Pictured above: Dr. Clifton Bell, Jr., Philip Cheek Jr., Trustee Philip Cheek, Sr., Trustee Edward Little, Pastor Joseph E. Kearns & Walter Rush.

Pictured are: Rev. George McCormick, Dr. Clifton Bell, Jr., Sis. Ann McCormick, Sis. Coble, Trustee Philip Cheek, Sr., Tavia McCormick, Brittney Coble & Pastor Joseph E. Kearns.

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

March 3-4, 2005
Ministers' Council Leadership Summit
Goldsboro, NC

April 5-8, 2005
Annual Evangelism Conference
Chappell Memorial Baptist Church
110 Bradford Drive • Charlotte, NC

April 9, 2005
Laymen's League Mid-Annual One Day Session
First Baptist Church • 101 S. Wilmington St. • Raleigh, NC
(The Banquet will be held on Friday, April 8th at the church)

April 21-23, 2005
GBSC Music Conference
Martin Street Baptist Church
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Second Chances

By Dr. Donaldson Jones, President

Greetings in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. On behalf of Vice President, Rev. Walter S. Taylor, Secretary, Rev. Larry Allen and the entire staff of The Ministers Council of The General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc., we pray God's choice blessings upon you as we celebrate the comings of the soon coming King, who came born as a babe in Bethlehem and is come as Savior and Lord in the hearts of the born again believers.

Dr. Donaldson **Jones**

The following message was presented at the 2002 Congress of Christian Education during a seminar on Narrative Preaching by Dr. James H. Harris, pastor of Second Baptist Church in Richmond, Virginia.

It is my prayer that this message will speak to your hearts as it has spoken to mine.

SECOND CHANCES

"The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time,
saying 'Get up, go to Nineveh, that great city and
proclaim to it the message that I tell you.'
So Jonah set out and went to Nineveh,
according to word of the Lord."
Jonah 3:1-10

Many of us today have wasted and squandered money and opportunities. We have faltered and failed in so many ways to do what God has called us to do, and yet we have had so little compassion for others. It seems that we are so quick to condemn the faults and failures of others; oftentimes, so eager to accuse, point a finger and judge someone else for their human weaknesses, and their failures, their slips of conscience and their acquiescence to the luring power of the flesh – the body. We have a condemning air about us, an arrogant spirit of superiority that suggests that we have never done anything wrong – that we have never lied, that we have never fornicated nor committed adultery, that we have never deceived or tricked or schemed, that we have never been homeless or poor or hungry. We act as if we are perfect and everybody else is in need of salvation – everybody except us.

Jonah teaches us that we are not perfect, that failure is a part of the human condition, that life includes failure and if we are going to be saved, we have to learn to cope with the ups and downs of life. Jonah has disobeyed God. He has ignored the call of God. He has gone in the wrong directions. He has been thrown overboard. He has been swallowed up by a whale. He has prayed to the Lord from the belly of the whale – Jonah has been to hell and back. He has been in the deep, dark, dungeons of sheol. But God was still there – you can run, but you cannot get away from God. And while folk in the church, folk in the pews and in the choir stands, folk in church school – deacons and trustees, may be slow to forgive and quick to judge their fellow brothers and sisters, God is a God of *Second Chances*. God does not write us off even if we go in the wrong directions. God does not abandon us even if we go down the wrong path, on the wrong boat, causing chaos and stormy weather for others. Yes, Jonah was disobedient. Yes, Jonah was hard-headed. Yes, Jonah was obstinate and ugly in his behavior and attitude. Yes, Jonah was determined to do what *he* wanted to do, so much like so many folk in the church determined to disobey God, determined to disregard the word of the Lord. But the sweetest, most gracious words of scripture are found in this text. The most loving and kindest words of prophetic literature are found in this text. The words of this text contain words that describe the essential nature of God – a God who gives us second chances.

Don't write people off. Don't be unforgiving. Don't be mad and unkind, and don't be rigid and inflexible in your relationships with others. Give folk a second chance! God is a God of second chances. God is the God who gives us the opportunity to develop a new consciousness, a second time. Let's look at the text more closely to learn a few lessons from it this morning.

The first thing we glean from the text is that the message of the Lord is the same, the second time around. Second changes don't mean that the message has changed. The message is the same. The text says *"The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time saying 'Get up, go to Nineveh that great city.'"* Jonah still has to get up and go to Nineveh – the assignment has not changed. The destination has not changed; the mission and the mandate are still the same – Go to Nineveh that great city. The destination is the same, the place that we ran from the first time and got into a whole lot of trouble – is still the place that God wants us to go to. Just because Jonah had taken a holiday, an excursion on the Mediterranean Sea and caused a lot of havoc in his life and the life of the sailors, doesn't mean that his orders had changed. Just because he had gone AWOL didn't mean that God had changed his orders. And although he had said, "NO!" the first time, when God came to him the second time He said the same thing, "Go to Nineveh!" God's orders are the same. Go to Nineveh! Do what I ask you to do. Go to the jails and prisons; go to the schools and street corners; go to those who are helpless; go to Nineveh, that great city, where the power brokers reside; go to Nineveh. Go where I send you. Second chances give us an opportunity to do what we didn't do the first time.

Secondly, not only are you to go to Nineveh, but you are to do the same thing I told you the first time. Going is not enough, but the purpose for your going is to preach! Proclaim the message that I tell you! The text says: "The word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time, saying arise, get up, go to Nineveh, that great city, and proclaim, preach to it the message that I tell you." God wanted Jonah to preach, not to philosophize or rationalize, but to preach! Not to sing or to testify, but to preach! Not to entertain or caress folk in their carnality, in their baneful and base behavior, but to preach! Not to come in timidity and in fear, but to preach! - Boldly proclaiming the word of God. Jonah wasn't sent to do anything but preach and to preach or proclaim the message that the Lord told him to preach. ■

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A Pure Heart

Submitted by
Dr. A.T. Griffey, III
GBSC Statistician

As Jesus watched people place their offering into the temple treasury, He noticed a poor widow who put in two coins valued at less than a penny.

Dr. A.T.
Griffey, III

Mark 12:43-44 – *"Calling His disciples to Him, Jesus said, 'I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the treasury than all the others. They all gave out of their wealth; but she, out of her poverty, put in everything, all she had to live on.'"*

This passage gives us a wonderful example of faith and how God must be the Lord of our finances, but the real message actually goes much deeper.

We have all been blessed in so many ways; and we are called to be good stewards, or managers, of all our blessings. As a good steward, we must present all we possess back to our Heavenly Father as an offering of love. Yes, this relates to our financial resources; but it also means we are to offer our gifts, abilities, talents, and time back to God through service and ministry to others. God created us (the complete package of who we are) for a purpose. We will need to spend good quality time with God to fully understand our purpose, but we can be absolutely sure that God has NOT blessed us so we can advance our own selfish agenda!

Every one of our blessings, no matter how small, is given so we can bless God in return. We often hold back from ministry opportunities because we feel our "offering" is insignificant. We feel inadequate to serve or unworthy to make a true contribution to the work of God's Kingdom. But God is never concerned with the magnitude of a gift. He is, and always has been, concerned with the condition of our heart. *"Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obeying the voice of the Lord? To obey is better than sacrifice, and to heed is better than the fat of rams"* (1 Samuel 15:22). How we give is much more important than what we give.

God does not need our money, time, ability, or anything we accomplish or produce. He loves us dearly and desires to receive the complete love and devotion which is given with our offering. Jesus was blessed by a widow who gave from her heart, even though the actual gift carried very little earthly value.

If we want our service or ministry to have significance in the eyes of God, we must focus on the One to whom we are giving rather than on the value of the gift in the eyes of man. With our eyes focused, we must then give with all the love in our heart. If our heart is pure in the giving, God will receive our offering as a true blessing. There are no worthless or insignificant gifts when the gift is given from a pure heart. ■

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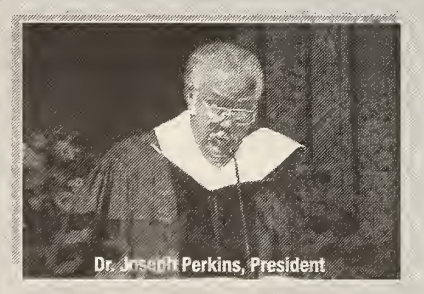

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Bridging the Text

By Al Fullwood
Adjunct Instructor of Worship and Homiletics,
Religion and Philosophy Department
Shaw University
Homiletics and Hermeneutics Instructor,
Apex School of Theology
Pastor: Riley Hill Baptist Church, Wendell, NC

Continuing the discussion from the previous article, care should be given in the usage of titles as the "thing" that makes the sermon. **At no time should titles have ascendancy over the text, becoming the source relied upon to carry the point of the message.** The attention given to titles as strategic in the sermon document is not only misappropriation of significance but also deceptive and misleading. Turning the hearer's focus to the portion on the plate that has the least amount of nutrients important for health and life will bring about unhealthy consequences in the formation of spiritual growth. Like a child whose diet has been that of sweets over vegetables and meats, congregations living off of sweets of titles, owing to cultural flavor of the times, suffers from malnourishment.

Titles should not be seen as having the same function of slogans used as a marketing tool or device to sell a product. Everything seems to hinge on getting the attention of the audience for whom the product is created. For the preacher, where should he/she search in the hopes of appropriating titles for sermon documents? Is the television appropriate for shaping titles? Are secular songs written and sung by talented artists a rich reservoir? Are significant world events sufficient? What about personal experience or even sponsoring events of nature? How far or to what extent is the preacher willing to go in search of a title that resonates well with the pangs of the congregation, spurring cheers, laughter, and applause, giving assent to entertainment?

If the preaching-text is taken from the Scripture, likewise, the sermon from the text, then it does follow that the title should be an offspring of the text. Titles should be both biblical and theologically wrapped in universal truth for a particular audience. **Cross-fertilization of biblical sermon content with worldly or secular titles weakens the message desiring to play on the human whims of the listening audience.** Titles as a general homiletical rule should emerge out of and be made from the same textual fabric as the structure of the sermon, avoiding the gospel preached as something else. Paul has given stern notice to not preach any other gospel than Christ Crucified, lest a curse infers.

Dr. Al **Fullwood**

Total trust in the principles of biblical truth in the sermon document will approximate conviction and conversion over use of the sermon as an entertainment and amusement enterprise. Sermons, if they are to remain gospel, must seek to be Christ and not culturally rooted.

For questions or comments: RHBC@BellSouth.Net. ■

"Resolving Grievances"

By Dr. James W. Smith,Chairperson
Legal/Constitution Committee

I receive calls on a regular basis concerning some conflict that is going on in our churches. Church Conflict, if not handled properly, will eventually lead the church into court. So it would seem that a church would do well to establish a procedure for dealing with disputes, disagreements, or grievances, which are bound to develop in spite of the best of Christian intentions. It is tragic when such matters make it to the court system to be resolved. Every effort should be made to settle such matters within the framework of the church structure. A church with a number of employees may want to establish a written procedure for dealing with employee grievances. Such procedure may include the following ideas.

Dr. James W. **Smith**

The immediate supervisor should be the first person involved when an employee has a problem. A written record should be made of the grievance and the attempt to deal with it. Several efforts may have to be made to resolve the issue. If the difficulty cannot be dealt with at this level, then the next level of supervision should be involved. All of the records of the attempts to solve the problem should be reviewed, and additional solutions explored.

If the supervisors cannot develop a satisfactory solution, it is helpful to have some type of a committee (personnel, pastor relations) made up of qualified church members who relate to personnel matters. These persons should be brought into the discussion to give greater insight into possible solutions. Every effort should be made to deal with such matters in the church rather than securing an attorney and going to court. The above matters are things Bruce P. Powers talks about in his book, "Church Administration Handbook".

Now, there is nothing that I am aware of that can stop a church or church members from taking each other to court. But if a church would consider placing some type of language into her bylaws that would require the church or members to exhaust the church's remedy before going to court, such conflicts may be resolved prior to court. Language such as the following could be helpful.

"Neither the church nor her members shall bring a legal action against the church and members shall not bring a legal action against each other without first exhausting his/her administrative remedy. For this purpose, administrative remedy shall include: (1) allowing the moderator and/or independent council of the association of the church's membership or a designate of the General Baptist State Convention of NC (example, Moderator of Moderators' Council) to assist in mediating and resolving such issues; or (2) allowing an independent professional mediation or dispute resolution agency assist in resolving such issues."

It is believed that once these steps are taken, the parties are more likely to arrive at some solution and thereby eliminate the need to proceed to court.

If I can be of service to you, please do not hesitate to contact me: Dr. James W. Smith, Chairperson, Legal/Constitution Committee, General Baptist State Convention of NC, Inc., 146 Presidents Drive, Durham, North Carolina 27704, (919) 479-0501, Email: Jsmith9450@aol.com. ■

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Fellowship Banquet Observed by District III Ushers

"Doorkeepers in the House of the Lord, called for ministry; encouraged to be faithful" was the theme for District III Ushers as they observed their annual Fellowship Banquet on Saturday, November 20th with host pastor and guest speaker, Rev. J. A. Cuthbertson, of Pleasant Hill Baptist Church, Charlotte.

Mr. Forest **Eaves**

The Praise Team Choir of Pleasant Hill provided the inspirational music for this occasion. Dr. C. V. Owens, Dean of District III Ushers, and pastor of First Mount Zion Baptist Church, Charlotte, served as Master of Ceremonies.

State President and Coordinator, Bro. Forrest Eaves, Jr., delivered words of greetings, saying that District III was the Number One District in the State.

The Awards Committee Chairperson, Sis. Bessie Carson presented Bro. Jarrod Blue, 1st place winner of the 2004 Oratorical Contest with a plaque. Bro. Blue is a freshman at Davidson College. His parents, Rev. and Sis. Blue accepted the award in his absence. Other awards were: church of the year, Saint Paul Baptist Church, Charlotte, accepted by President, Bro. David Jones, and Usher of the Year, Bro. John Howard, also a member of Saint Paul Baptist.

A Memorial Tribute for deceased ushers of Ebenezer, Gaston County, Gold Hill, Guiding Light, Mecklenburg General, Mount Peace, Lane Creek, Rising Star and Stanley County Associations were remembered by the lighting of a battery operated candle and the following reading and prayer:

"We light this candle in their memory. We remember them for their tireless service, which serves as an example to us all. They are no longer physically present with us, but the mere memory of having shared life with them is inspirational and causes to scratch our memory. Jesus said in John 5:24, because they have heard his word and believed, they have crossed over from death to life. The 116th Psalm:15th verse says, Precious in the sight of the Lord is there death of his saints, and Ecclesiastes 7:1 says the day of death is better than the day of birth." Let us pray: Our Father in the heavens, we pause for this brief moment in remembrance of our fellow ushers (sisters and brothers) whom once went soldiering with us, but have since answered your calling them to enter into that place you have prepared for them. Father, we also would like to thank you for the impressions and imprints they've made in our lives. We believe they stand on the sidelines, cheering us on, as we strive to run this race. We pray for strength and courage to stay the course until it becomes our hour to answer your calling to a higher reward in Christ Jesus. We offer this prayer in Jesus' Name. Amen.

The Master of Ceremonies delivered words of Grace and then we dined on baked chicken, stew beef over rice, collard greens, green beans, pound cake, peach cobbler, and ice tea, catered and served by Bro. Billy Craig and staff.

Door prizes were awarded along with drawings for prizes as a result of revenues for the scholarship funding.

Everyone was excited with anticipation by the time host speaker Cuthbertson mounted the platform to deliver a dynamic message to these awaiting doorkeepers.

Rev. Cuthbertson spoke from Exodus, saying Moses did not have an easy job leading the children of Israel out of Egypt. In this crowd, everybody was not converted. All who came through the church doors are not converted. You cannot mistreat folks. You're not the judge nor jury. Your job is to lead them into the church house. You don't lead them with your eyes or your attitude.

Ushers, don't be upset because folks complain. Keep in mind how God puts up with you. He continued and summed up his message to the ushers by telling them, what would the church be without ushers? Lost, in a mess, like a ship without a sail, a church bus without gas, wheels, oil, or a car without a steering wheel. We need you and thank God for all of you.

A standing ovation was given in response to a great message.

Benediction was announced over some 250 plus attendees of this event, by Dr. C. V. Owens. ■

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Reverend Marvin T. Clowney, *Dean*, 900 College Street, Clinton, NC 28328, Home: (910) 502-2883, Church: (910) 592-5955

Mr. Roy Harris, *Assistant Dean*, 59 Bartlett Street, Asheville, NC 28801, Home: (828) 253-3560

Ms. Eddie Culbreth, *Chairperson*, First Aid/Nurses Aid, 822, Cathey Road, Charlotte, NC 28214, Home: (704) 392-6164

CONVENTION PROMOTIONAL COMMITTEE

Please contact these persons for your group needs.

Usher's Manuals and Usher's Literature - $5.00: *Mrs. Helen M. Thompson, Chairperson,* 722 Eccles Drive, Fayetteville, NC, (910) 488-5322

Usher's Gloves - $10.00 *(small, medium & large)*: Mr Forest M. Eaves, President, 801 Walnut Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28208-4545, (704) 372-5338

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MACON SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH, Macon, NC – The pastor search committee is accepting resumes for the position of pastor for 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. We request that interested applicants reside in a maximum distance of a 30 – 35 mile radius. Applicants must possess the following qualifications and responsibilities.

Qualifications:

Born-again, spirit-filled, ordained and divinely called, with strong family and community values.

Be a licensed, Ordained Baptist Minister.

Must be able to teach Bible Study.

Must be able to work with all age groups.

Strong knowledge of Baptist Doctrines, church policies and procedures.

Experienced as a senior pastor, but will consider an experienced associate pastor.

Must have Spiritual maturity, and be able to preach and teach the Word of GOD.

Willingness to administer communion and perform Baptismal service.

Possess strong and proven administrative experience.

Divinity school degree preferred, but will consider a combination of education and experience.

Responsibilities:

Plan, prepare and deliver sermons.

Visit and commune with sick and shut-in members and bereaved families.

Interested candidates please submit resume to **Ms. Sylvia Dunston, Church Secretary, 1472 Hwy. 401 South, Warrenton, NC 27589, (252) 257-0221.** ■

Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church • New Bern, NC

Is currently accepting resumes for the position of Pastor. Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church is a member of the Old Eastern Missionary Baptist Association.

Potential Candidate Qualifications:

- Must be led by the Spirit of God in all matters and perform pastoral duties according to the scriptures and the needs of the church.
- Must be ordained and licensed with strong knowledge of the Missionary Baptist doctrines, policies and practices.
- Must be able to conduct worship service on a weekly basis
- Three to five years of prior pastoral experience preferred.
- Seminary degree from an accredited school or equivalent education preferred.
- Ability to teach God's word and carry out administrative, leadership and counseling duties.
- Ability to communicate & work with all age levels. Participate in outreach ministries (including youth & senior ministries)
- Must be family and community oriented.
- Must be a good role model, of moral and ethical conduct.
- Must be able to teach and/or attend Sunday School, bible Study and Prayer Meeting, visit the sick and shut-in and support church functions.
- Must have a vision for the spiritual, intellectual and financial growth of the church.

Along with resume, potential candidate must provide:

- Four references: (2 professional; 2 personal). References should include name, address and telephone number.
- Name, address and telephone of previous or current church affiliation. Please include pastor's name, if applicable.
- Proof of religious credentials (license/ordination).
- Proof of degree for confirmation or transcript of completed courses if degree has not been conferred.
- Provide a mission statement for the church.

This list is certainly not inclusive, but serves as a snapshot of what we expect of a pastor as we build Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church into a church that will serve all of God's children.

If you feel God is leading you to this call, please submit resume to:

Pastoral Search Committee, Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church, Attn: Byron Walston, Co-Chairman, P.O. Box 13041, New Bern, NC

(Deadline: must be postmarked by midnight, February 28, 2005)

ANTIOCH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

5046 Antioch Road, Post Office Box 1969 • Oxford, N. C. 27565

The Antioch Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a pastor to serve as its spiritual leader, teacher, counselor and administrator. All interested persons should submit a letter of interest and resume to the Pulpit Committee.

Qualifications:

- Born again Christian • Licensed and Ordained Missionary Baptist Minister
- Strong knowledge of Baptist doctrines, church policies and procedures
- Must have a college and seminary degree from an accredited college or university
- Must have the ability to preach and teach the Bible
- Demonstrate experience in the delivery of well prepared sermons and be able to teach on all levels
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Interested applicants should Mail Resumes to:

Pastoral Search Committee, Attention: Deacon Leonard E. Peace, Sr.
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J.J. JOHNSON BAPTIST ASSEMBLY INFORMATION

The Site:

The J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly is a tract of land comprising seventy-five (75) or more acres, much of which is covered with a mixture of North Carolina Pine, red and white oak trees. The location of the Baptist Assembly is on more than 75 rolling acres in Laurel Hill, North Carolina in Scotland County.

In 1967, approximately two-thirds of the acreage was donated by Dr. and Mrs. Joy J. Johnson and their daughter, Deborah (Mrs. Alexander Killiens). Additional acres were purchased by the Woman's Convention and General Baptist State Convention.

Our Purpose:

The purpose of the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly in Laurel Hill is to provide a setting that is Christian in its atmosphere and is conducive to learning, worship, and meeting the needs of all individuals whom we serve. It seeks to provide opportunities for everyone to learn habits of good citizenship, and it provides at the same time opportunities to reach a maximum potential for Christian fellowship and fun experiences through democratic ideals and living.

The facility exists for the exclusive use by religious groups and/or organizations with similar aims regardless of ethnic origin.

Meeting Facilities:

At the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly, there are various meeting facilities available. Listed below are the seating capacity (theater style) and lodging:

- Rowan Association Chapel — Seating Capacity: 300-400
- Horne Lodge — Seating Capacity: 20-25, Sleeps 12
- Alston Lodge — Seating Capacity: 100, Sleeps 64
- Lumber Bridge Association Lodge — Seating Capacity: 100, Sleeps 64
- Brown Assembly Dining Hall (Cafeteria Style) — Seating Capacity: 200

Individuals should bring their own linen, blankets, soap and other toiletries for the lodging facilities.

"And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south."
Psalm 107:3

Send Applications & Funds to:

General Baptist State Convention, J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly
603 S. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC 27601
(Make checks payable to J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly)

Sources: "1974" Brochure and the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly Guide And Handbook (1985).

GBSC UPCOMING SESSIONS

2004 - 2006

YEAR	CITY	HOST
	MID-YEAR	
2005	Elizabeth City	St. Stephens
2006	Wilmington	Shiloh
	ANNUAL	
2005	Asheville	Mt. Zion
2006	Raleigh	Martin Street
	TRINITY SESSION	
2005	Fayetteville	Union Association
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Church building should be compatible with their neighborhoods. The quality of construction, design, and landscaping should create a meaningful setting which is an inspiration to its members and the community.

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There are many phases in church planning and design which require a specialist in that field. When you start your next building program, I hope you will give me a call.

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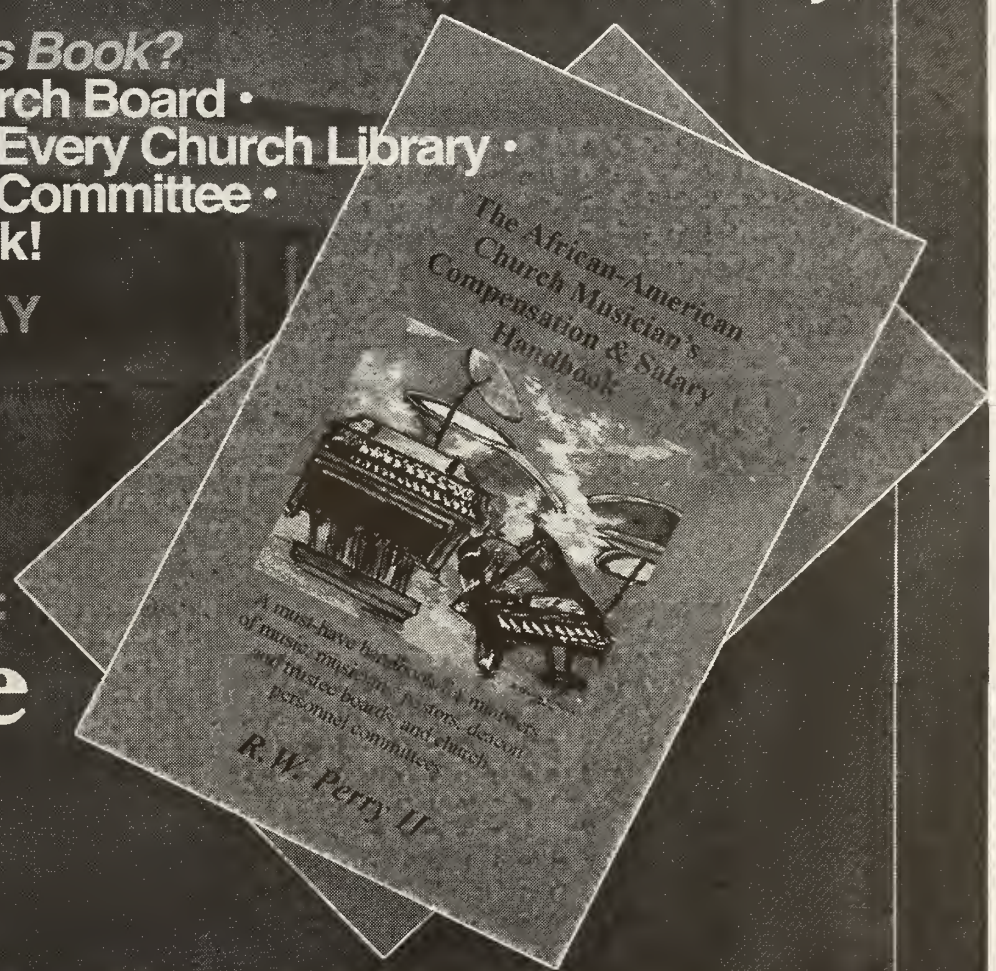

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BAPTIST INFORMER:

EXPLORING THE WONDERS OF GOD'S GRACE

Looking to God to Establish the Work of Our Hands

Reasons that are deeper than I can explain, but I am extremely grateful to have this opportunity to express to you hopes of a prosperous New Year. Can you believe that we have again embarked upon a new year? Perhaps that I am older, time for me appears to move so swiftly. Seemingly, I still have some more time to spend in the year that just ended. Yet, in spite of how things may appear to me, we are in the beginning of a new year.

To those to whom time also may appear to be moving extremely fast, let me just say that we are not experiencing an illusion. Recently, a rereading of the 90th Psalm helped me in my understanding of how quickly time passes by. If you have attended a Home Going Celebration of a person who lived to be at least 70 years old or older, there is a strong possibility that you are familiar with the 90th Psalm. It is common for the 90th Psalm to be read at the Home Going Celebration of someone who had lived to be at least 70 or older.

I know many would think differently, but I am not sure if a Home Going Celebration is the best utilization of the 90th Psalm. In your leisure time, reread the 90th Psalm closely. Check it out. The emphasis in the 90th Psalm is not death, but rather how quick and swift time is. Observe what the Psalmist says about time, "For a thousand years in thy sight are but as a yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night (90:4)... For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale that is told. The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away (90:9-10)." How long we live is not the issue in 90th Psalm, but rather how long we live swiftly passes by. Our life in relation to time, asserts the Psalmist, is like the flower. In the morning, the flower flourishes and grows up, but in the evening it is cut down and withers away (Psalm 90:6).

The essential lesson in the 90th Psalm that Psalmist would have for us to learn is proper and wise usage of the time that we have to live. The length of time that we live is not the key to a fulfilled life, but rather it is that to which we have committed our lives to during the time that we have been given to live. Since the time in our lives passes by so swiftly and to avoid the mistake of mismanaging how we utilize our lives, the Psalmist suggests that we allow God to establish the work of our hands. In other words, to fully take advantage of a very finite and swift time that we have to live, we want to accept the purpose that God has defined for our lives. We should never forget that we were made and created for God's purpose and glory. Therefore, regardless of how swift time passes by, if our lives are committed to the purpose that God has established for our lives, time then becomes a matter of a reflection and captivation of a moment. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. only lived for thirty-nine years, but oh how his time on earth is a moment that continues to have an impact on the lives of people all over the world.

So as the New Year already has begun to move swiftly let us go forth into the New Year clinging to the advice of the Psalmist. For the Psalmist advised, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, an thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it" (Psalm 90:16-17). Remember, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, only lived thirty-three years. Yet those thirty-three years are a reflection and moment in time that will forever be remembered and utilized because Jesus allowed God to establish the work of his hands.

- Editor

BAPTIST INFORMER

603 S. Wilmington Street
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Baptist Informer

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Jones Energizes crowd at Martin Luther King Banquet

A crowd approaching 1,000 people gathered in the Raleigh Civic and Convention Center on January 7 to hear The Reverend Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr.'s keynote address to this annual gathering of Baptists from across North Carolina. Jones (who is Senior Pastor of Charlotte's Friendship Missionary Baptist Church and a past president of the General Baptist State Convention) brought the packed room to its feet with his repeated hopeful promise of "someday."

In classic Jones style, the address began with reflections on the history of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that ultimately led to desegregation of the public schools. After the Supreme Court reached a decision in *Brown* in 1954, the Court turned its attention to how to implement the ruling in the following term. The NAACP pressed the Court to use the word "forthwith" in order to accelerate progress toward desegregation of the public schools. The Court finally opted to use a phrase associated with Oliver Wendell Holmes, "with all deliberate speed."

Jones offered that the "with all deliberate speed" phrase was interpreted by many in the country as a means to delay or even prevent progress in the area of civil and human rights in the 1950's and 60's. "It pointed not to a timeframe for reaching a goal, but to a 'someday,'" Jones reasoned. Linking the phrase to the classic civil rights era song, "We Shall Overcome," Jones argued that the same phrase used by some to maintain the status quo is the same ideal that inspires Missionary Baptists to work for justice, support the cause of missions, and advance the causes of the Kingdom of Christ in the earth. The gathering was inspired to keep believing in a better day to come while working to bring the powers of faith, hope and service to bear to meet the challenges of today.

An excited and energized Baptist family poured out of the Raleigh Civic Center following Jones' address. One Banquet attendee was quoted as saying, "I often come to these events and leave a little sad, but not tonight. I'm excited about doing much more in my Church and in our Convention. Dr. Jones was awesome."

Dr. Charles T. Bullock (GBSC President) presided over the gala evening that included participation from each of the Convention's Vice Presidents. First Vice President Howard W. Parker, Jr. introduced the keynote speaker. Second Vice President Nilous M. Avery, II offered a welcome speech. Third Vice President Leonzo D. Lynch presented the head table dignitaries. Fourth Vice President Ricky Banks gave the invocation. Ms. Kenya Woods (a member of the Piney Wood Baptist Church in Ahoskie) gave music for the evening, accompanied by Mr. David Eggleston, the Convention's chief musician. Mrs. Colene B. Stanley, President of Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Missions Convention's Women's Auxiliary, was on hand to offer the evening dinner grace. The Banquet attendees were given a special treat when a liturgical dance team from Raleigh's Martin Street Baptist Church performed.

Vice President-at-Large John H. Grant assisted the President in recognizing the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Presidential Award Recipients. Each year, the Convention recognizes persons

JONES, Cont'd on Page 2

Gray named EST

The Reverend Haywood T. Gray has been named the seventh Executive Secretary-Treasurer in the one hundred thirty-eight years of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc. The Executive Committee elected Gray on November 15, 2004. He began service on a part-time basis immediately and began full-time service on January 1, 2005. When announcing Reverend Gray's election, GBSC President Charles T. Bullock said that Gray "brings to this position new hope, new inspiration, and zeal to lead us to new heights. We are excited about what God will do through his leadership."

Rev. Haywood **Gray**

The Constitution of the General Baptist State Convention sets the parameters of the duties of the Executive Secretary-Treasurer. According to the Constitution, ***"The Executive Secretary-Treasurer shall have administrative supervision over, and is responsible for the total promotion of the Convention's program. He shall be the chief executive officer of the General Board staff, the chief budget officer of the General Board staff, the chief professional advisor of the Convention and its Committees, the secretary and treasurer of the General Board and the Convention, and a strong spiritual leader providing statewide guidance and inspiration."*** When asked of his reaction to such a broad job description, Gray responded, "I am amazed at how long God has been preparing me for this avenue of service. I am overwhelmed, excited and very humbled by it all."

It is something of an understatement to say that God has brought our new Executive Secretary-Treasurer a long way from what he fondly refers to as "the backwoods of Southern Virginia." Raised in Southampton County, Virginia, just a few miles from

GRAY, Cont'd on Page 2

Congress and Ushers Meet in February

The M. C. Benton Convention Center in Winston-Salem is the site for the One Day/Mid-Year Sessions of the Congress of Christian Education and the N. C. Baptist Ushers Convention, auxiliaries to the General Baptist State Convention. The Congress will meet on Saturday, February 12 and the Ushers will meet on Saturday, February 26.

Ms. Diane M. Newell, President of the Congress, has outlined an exciting program for the Congress gathering. The Congress will open at 9:00 a.m. with a Joint Assembly. Class sessions will begin at 9:45 a.m. Eight curricular divisions are planned for the session: ministerial development, leadership development, Sunday school, teacher training and development, youth ministry, Biblical and general studies, music ministry, and youth division. The Congress faculty includes Mrs. Portia H. Brandon, Mr. Frank Byrd, Ms. Janifer Campbell, Mr. David Eggleston, Mrs. Lula Gainey, Dr. J. C. Harris, Rev. Jamale Johnson, Rev. Tomi King, Dr. Leonzo Lynch, Dr. Layfayette Maxwell, Mrs. Trumilla McDowell, Mrs. Yvonne McGraw, Mrs. Alice Ragland, Dr. Jasper P. Reed, Mrs. Elizabeth W. Young, and Mrs. Rita Warren,

The Youth Assembly will offer some challenging presentations including Storyteller B Rich (Rev. Brenda Richardson) and the Baptist Union Baptist Church Gospel Jazz Ensemble of Hope Mills. Two workshops ("Praising God for our Heritage" and "Praising God Through Stepping and Dancing") will also be offered to the youth attending.

The Closing Worship Service will feature a sermon from last year's Congress host pastor, The Reverend Lamont Johnson, Pastor of Winston-Salem's Phillips Chapel Baptist Church. The Reverend Erich V. Williams and the New Saint Paul Baptist Church of Eden are this year's hosts.

CONGRESS, Cont'd on Page 2

JONES, Cont'd From Page 1

who have made important contributions to their respective fields of work and service. Dr. J. Donald Ballard (Pfafftown), Dr. Elbert Lee, Jr. (Rocky Mount) and Mrs. Zettie B. Williams (Magnolia) were this year's recipients. President Bullock presented an engraved plaque following Dr. Grant's moving presentation of each recipient. Dr. Ballard was honored for "demonstrated excellence in preaching and pastoral leadership." Dr. Lee's citation was for "acclaimed distinction in advocacy for seniors and gerontology research." Mrs. Williams' "exemplary leadership in education and community service" was recognized by the Convention.

The Banquet also marked a "changing of the guard" as Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer Reginald A. Wells was honored for his service and new Executive Secretary-Treasurer Haywood T. Gray was formally presented to the Baptist family. In presenting Reverend Wells to the attendees, Gray said, "a strong wind forces some to retreat, to give up on their dreams, and to abandon their visions. But a select few — instead of giving into their fears – lift their heads, square their shoulders, and challenge life's gale force winds. Such is the case with The Reverend Reginald A. Wells." Following Gray's introduction, President Bullock offered praise and appreciation to Wells for his service and presented Wells with an engraved plaque. Reverend Wells thanked the Convention for its support and cooperation during his tenure and expressed personal appreciation to his family, Church family, and friends across the state.

Dr. David C. Forbes, Sr. (Pastor of Christian Faith Baptist Church in Raleigh and Chairman of GBSC Board of Trustees) was tasked with the duty of presenting the new Executive Secretary-Treasurer. In presenting Gray (who is a member of Christian Faith), Forbes offered a hopeful vision of what the GBSC could do under Gray's administrative leadership. To celebrate and commemorate Gray's election as Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Dr. Forbes presented a contribution of $3,000.00 from Christian Faith Baptist Church for state missions. Forbes challenged the pastors present to lead their congregations to make a special offering for state missions as a gesture of welcome to Gray and as a pledge of support for his new efforts as administrative head of the Convention.

Gray's remarks stirred the crowd as he spoke of the power of the word "shall." He provided an optimistic view of the Convention's future focused, not on what God might do, but what the Bible promises that He "shall" do.

■

CONGRESS, Cont'd From Page 1

Similarly, Mr. Forrest Eaves, Jr., President of the N. C. Baptist Ushers Convention, has announced a challenging program for the Ushers Mid Year Session. The program will begin at 9:00 a.m. The session will include a Health Seminar (led by Dr. Anita Holmes) and Greetings from our General Baptist family leadership. Workshops for adult and youth ushers, and nurses will be offered. The adult workshop will be lead by the Ushers Deans (Marvin T. Clowney, Dean, and Roy Harris, Assistant Dean). Mrs. Ruby Philyaw and Mrs. Annie Pegram will lead the youth workshops. Mrs. Eddie Culbreath will conduct the nurses' workshop.

Special recognitions are planned for ushers who have exhibited faithful service across the years. According to President Eaves, "the session is designed to education and stimulate. Educate the ushers on their proper roles of service and stimulate the ushers to greater service."

The Closing Worship Service will feature a sermon by Dr. A. T. Griffey (Pastor of the Mount Carmel Baptist Church in Winston-Salem), last year's Ushers host. The Reverend William S. Fails and the Greater First United Baptist Church of High Point are the hosts for this year's Ushers session.

President Eaves has emphasized that ushers materials (pins, books, and gloves) will be available for purchase during the Ushers One Day Session. The Ushers pins are $6.00 each and are also available by contacting Mr. Archie J. Lofton (333 Wallington Road, Wilmington, NC 28409). The Usher's manual, *A Ministry of Service, A Ministry of Joy*, is $5.00 each and is also available by contacting Mrs. Helen M. Thompson (722 Eccles Drive, Fayetteville, NC 28301). Usher's gloves (in small, medium, large, and extra large sizes) are $10.00 a pair and are also available by contacting President Forrest M. Eaves, Jr. (801 Walnut Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28208-4545).

Churches are asked to donate $400.00 to each the Congress and Ushers for the 2004-05 year. Churches may opt to contribute $200.00 in February during the sessions and the remaining $200.00 should be sent before the close of the fiscal year on August 31, 2005. Individual registration for both events is $10.00 per person.

■

GRAY, Cont'd From Page 1

the epicenter of the 1831 Nat Turner slave rebellion, Gray has very humble beginnings. His family never even owned a car. Reared by his late maternal grandmother, he remembers his family moving often during his youth. He was a teenager before his grandmother was able to purchase her first home. "I remember her being so proud of that little house and, until her death, she was obsessed about keeping it neat, clean and in good repair," says Gray. "She taught me how to stretch a dollar and to take care of what God blesses you with."

He answered the call to preach when he was fifteen years old. Though sure of God's call, he never imagined the idea of being involved in some form of full-time ministry. "All of the ministers in our community were part-time and non-resident. I didn't have a clue that a person could support themselves or even keep themselves busy doing ministry," Gray recalls. When accepted at Averett College (now Averett University) in Danville, Virginia, he decided on a double major in Social Work and English. "In the back of my naïve mind, I thought I would do social work to earn a living," Gray recalls, "and that the English background would helpful if a Church needed me once or twice a month." Because he received a ministerial scholarship from the University, he was required to enroll in a course designed to help students in ministry understand their calling as a career. "I was shocked that someone could actually do ministry as a life's vocation and I knew instantly that this was what I wanted to do," he says. He did not change his major because his intentions were to go to graduate school after Averett. Back in those days, his goal was to earn a Ph.D. in Black Church studies and teach in a University.

It was at Averett that Gray's work ethic was honed. "I had more jobs than I could count: two work study jobs, babysitting, English tutor for Vietnamese refugees, and preaching whenever somebody wanted to hear me," he notes. He completed his four year degree in three years, not because "I was so smart, but because I was so poor." He could not afford to pay private school tuition for four years and continue to send money home to help support his then ailing grandmother.

His plans to enroll in seminary after graduating from Averett were put on hold by the call of Shady Grove Baptist Church in Pelham, North Carolina. He accepted the call to become their pastor in February 1981. "The deacons asked me to sign a contract for one year while they continued to search for the 'right man,'" says Gray with a broad smile. One year turned into seventeen years. He soon moved to Yanceyville, North Carolina and became active in Church, community and denominational affairs. "There is no doubt," he remarks, "that being at Shady Grove was the most meaningful time in my development as a minister. Much of who I am today, I owe to the good people of Shady Grove Church and of Caswell County."

He claimed the attention of Dr. E. B. Turner in the early 1980's and became active in the General Baptist State Convention. He served in several capacities in the Turner administration including Secretary of the General Board and a member of several Convention committees including Budget and Program. He sat a term as a Trustee of Shaw Divinity School and was a part of the early movement to seek accreditation for the seminary. In 1990, Gray ran for and was elected Fourth Vice President. "The election win came as something of a shock because so many people thought it would be impossible for a pastor of a

GRAY, Cont'd Page 7

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THEME: *"By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armor of righteousness..."* (II Corinthians 6:7)

The President Speaks

President Bullock updates convention and offers gratitude

Dr. Charles **Bullock**

By Dr. Charles Bullock
President GBSC

Greetings in the marvelous, matchless and wonderful Name of Jesus Christ, our Guide and Provider.

Another page is turned. A new and exciting chapter is being written in the history of our great Convention. I am grateful to God and you for all the blessings and support you have offered as we continue diligently *"to serve the present age."*

As stewards of this great mission of Christ through our Convention, we share with you, our Convention supporters, the following update of our work:

NEW EST: After an extensive process conducted by the Personnel Committee (chaired by Pastor P. C. Holland) and the enthusiastic approval by the Executive Committee, a new, dedicated, competent and enthusiastic Executive Secretary-Treasurer, The Reverend Haywood T. Gray, is now on board full-time. EST Gray is already doing a wonderful job.

MLK BANQUET: The Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet in January was a blessed success. Capably and inspiringly addressing the sell-out crowd was our own Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr. (a former President of our General Baptist State Convention). Dr. Jones challenged each of us to a renewed commitment to employ the ideals that Dr. King exemplified.

During the Banquet, it was my pleasure to present the 2005 Presidential Awards to the following outstanding, worthy recipients: Dr. *J. Donald Ballard, Dr. Elbert Lee, Jr., and Mrs. Zettie B. Williams.* Each of this year's recipients has rendered long, noteworthy and distinguished service to humankind.

PERSONNEL: A revised Personnel Policies and Procedures Manual for the GBSC has been distributed to the Executive Committee for review. After the input of the EST and final review, the implementation of these policies will insure more effectiveness in staff-management relations and efficiency in general operations.

TRUSTEES: The GBSC Trustee Board (appointed in October) has been busy giving unprecedented attention to the business of our Convention. Under the leadership of Dr. David C. Forbes, Sr., the Trustees has conducted very productive meetings. Currently, their focus is on our Housing Initiative Program. An expression of gratitude is in order for our Trustees, EST Gray, Project Manager Dexter Perry, Rev. Vincent Rozier, and other volunteers who are working diligently toward the completion of Phoenix Village (our development in Princeville, North Carolina). Funds and investors are currently needed to complete the homes and in the development.

TSUNAMI RELIEF: Churches of the General Baptist State Convention are responding to help those who are victims of the tragedy in Southeast Asia. We ask that you submit funds through our Convention designated for this cause. As these funds are received at Baptist Headquarters, they are being forwarded to Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention in Washington, DC. I am pleased to report that a total of $10,685.00 was received for Tsunami Relief in January. I am also pleased to report that $10,685.00 has been forwarded from the Headquarter to Lott Carey. The EST reports an average turnaround time of four days between the time that funds were received at Headquarters and sent on to Lott Carey! Let us continue to help this and other worthy causes of need among humankind.

> *"The Lord hath done great thing for us; whereof we are glad."*
> (Psalm 126:3.

AUDIT: I am pleased to say that our 2003-04 audit is complete. The EST and staff are reviewing the audit. Further results will be forthcoming as it is presented to the General Board at its next meeting. ■

Executive Secretary Treasurer

"We Still Believe In Super Heroes"

By Rev. Haywood Gray
Executive Secretary Treasurer

Meet our new Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Yes, in the picture in his Superman pose. Just over four decades ago, the person who would become chief administrative head of the greatest Baptist convention in the world was poised in his grandmother's yard, hands on his hips, clearly in Superman mode. More likely than not, a few minutes after taking the picture, the yet-to-be Executive Secretary-Treasurer "borrowed" a towel from the clothesline, used a clothespin to properly attach the towel to his person, and spent the rest of the afternoon fighting whatever evil he could find in the backyard. After forty years of experience with life and ministry, the Executive Secretary-Treasurer no longer believes in Superman, but he still – very much – believes in super heroes.

The heroes and heroines in which I believe today are not found in comic books or on television. The truest super people are found in the most ordinary places doing ordinary things in extraordinary ways. That pastor who holds down a pastorate and a fulltime job, but still finds time to know every child in his congregation by name and grade is a super hero. That deaconess who takes a special interest in a young woman and inspires her to do and be her best in every avenue of life is a super heroine. That teenager who – even though criticized by peers – continues to be faithful to Sunday school and youth ministry in Church because they are meaningful and real is a super teen. That congregation who has refused to give in to the negativity of the "nay Sayers" as it relates to the past, present and future of the General Baptist State Convention is a group of super men and women in the highest degree!

Obviously, I believe that the many persons who have never given up on our Convention and who have inspired others to keep believing, to keep praying, to keep participating and to keep giving are my modern day super heroes. There is something extraordinary about their faith and their faithfulness. My pastor puts it that they have learned to be "persistently patient and patiently persistent" which means that they never ever give up on the things that matter.

Thank you for the confidence that you have expressed by giving me this wonderful opportunity to serve the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc. Many of my friends from across the state keep reminding me of that stirring passage from Esther and tell me that I "have come to the Kingdom for such a time as this." While I am hesitant to completely embrace that claim, I am confident – in my heart of hearts – that I am resolved to do my best at trying to prove worthy of the trust and the confidences that have been placed in me.

I suspect that I will once again be about the business of imitating my super heroes: the men and women, the boys and girls, from Murphy to Manteo, all across the wonderful state of North Carolina who call themselves General Baptists. You are my heroes. Please be flattered by the imitation.

"Our Baptist paper, now the Baptist Informer, *is still a journal of North Carolina Baptists. It is an agency devoted to informing our people of what they are doing and what they can do."* Those words were written seventy-three years ago when the "official organ" of the General Baptist State Convention was renamed and re-formatted. Almost three quarters of a century later, the sentiment of those words ring true again. With this issue, the *Baptist Informer* takes on a new look and format. This change reflects an attempt to make the paper more modern, informative and helpful to our Baptist family. As Executive Secretary-Treasurer and Executive Editor of the *Informer,* it is my sincere hope that our readers will agree that this emerging new format will be exciting when received, informative when read, and unforgettable when put down. It is my hope that you will share your impression of the new *Informer* with me. Your comments will be the basis for further improvements in the paper. Please e-mail your comments (and criticisms) to me at gensec@gbsc.org. I am anxious to hear from you.

The Baptist Headquarters staff welcomes opportunities to travel across the state meeting Baptists and promoting the work of the Convention. This is especially true of meeting and events in our sixty-two Associations. Moderators are urged to contact the Headquarters with meeting dates early so that the appropriate staff assignments can be made to visit with Associations during the year. Whenever feasible, the Executive Secretary-Treasurer hopes to visit with our Associations. However, other staff stands ready to travel when the EST is unavailable. ■

GBSC Receives Technology Grant

The General Baptist State Convention has received a one-time grant from the Saint Paul Baptist Church of Charlotte to be used to upgrade the technology at the Baptist Headquarters. In announcing the grant, the Executive Secretary-Treasurer said that the improvements to operations at the Headquarters would be nothing short of "remarkable."

The Convention has contracted with G1Systems of Raleigh to implement the upgrades. The "Technology Refinement Plan" (jointly developed by G1Systems and the EST) will address several concerns. First, the grant will provide for an upgrade to the existing network. Upon completion, the computers in the Headquarters will be able to communicate with each other. This should reduce the amount of paperwork produced because staff members will be able to send forms and other documents to each other electronically.

A part of the network upgrade project will allow the Baptist Headquarters to become a "Wi-Fi Zone." "Wi-Fi" refers to wireless access to the Internet. By making the Headquarters a "Wi-Fi Zone," persons with wireless computer capability will be able to connect to the Internet while in the Baptist Headquarters without using any cable connections. Committee members are encouraged to bring their "Wi-Fi" laptops to meetings at the Headquarters and make use of the Internet access capabilities afforded by the technology upgrade taking place.

Secondly, the grant will provide funds to purchase two computers. One computer will be used by staff and will replace a very outdated computer. The other computer will be a "public" use computer. It will be available and accessible to visitors at the Baptist Headquarters. It will provide free access to the Internet.

Thirdly, the grant will provide the basis for a new digital document storage and retrieval system. According to Gray, the Baptist Headquarters generates an enormous amount of paperwork. The new system will allow the Headquarters to keep digital copies of forms, documents and other paperwork. The staff will be able to retrieve these documents electronically through their computers instead of having to manually search for documents in paper files. Ultimately, the new system will allow persons with the proper clearances to access documents stored on the Baptist Headquarters computers by way of the Internet. "This feature," says EST Gray, "will be especially helpful to Moderators and Pastors who will not have to wait for published reports to be mailed to them. They will be able to go to the GBSC website and download the information as needed."

"The Technology Refinement Plan" will be implemented in stages. It is hoped that it will principally be in place by midsummer. The St. Paul grant will lay the foundation for the technology needs of the Headquarters. Additional funds will be required to completely implement the Plan.

Charlotte's Saint Paul Baptist Church, the providers of the grant, has The Reverend Dr. Gregory K. Moss, Sr. as pastor.

GBSC to Co-sponsor Regional Correctional Chaplains Meeting

The General Baptist State Convention is a co-sponsor of the 2005 American Correctional Chaplain Association's Southeastern Conference. Coming to Raleigh April 24-27, the Conference will bring between 250 and 300 state and federal chaplains, pastors and laity from ten states in the southeastern United States. This will be the first time the Conference has been held in Raleigh, but it did meet in Charlotte in 1999. Inasmuch as more than three dozen of North Carolina's chaplains are affiliated with the General Baptist State Convention, it seemed natural that the GBSC would be a co-sponsor of this gathering in Raleigh, which is also the headquarters of the State Convention.

According to Reverend Melvin B. Solomon (Director of Transition Aftercare Network in the N. C. Department of Correction), the Conference will feature panel discussions, seminars, and sessions designed to challenge the Church community to respond to the need for transition ministry. The Conference opens on April 24 with a "Meet and Greet" reception and closes on April 24 following a business meeting. A highlight of the Conference will be a Banquet held on Tuesday, April 26. All events will be held at the Clarion Hotel State Capital, Raleigh.

Inasmuch as more than three dozen of North Carolina's chaplains are affiliated with the General Baptist State Convention, it seemed natural that the GBSC would be a co-sponsor of this gathering in Raleigh, which is also the headquarters of the State Convention.

Registration for the Conference is $55.00 in advance or $65.00 at the door. Day visitors (attending only on either Monday or Tuesday) may register for $25.00 per day. Banquet tickets are available for $35.00.

Further information is available at www.ncchaplainsprogram.com or by writing Chaplains Programs, ATTN: Betty Brown, 840 West Morgan Street, 4263 MSC, Raleigh, NC 27699. ■

Raleigh Area Volunteers Sought for Headquarters

The Baptist Headquarters has announced a search for members of Raleigh area Missionary Baptist Churches to sign up as Headquarters volunteers. A need for persons to volunteer (either on a one-time basis or on a continuing basis) has presented itself in the early days of the leadership of the new Executive Secretary-Treasurer.

"Unfortunately, we have a small staff," says EST Haywood T. Gray, "and there are not enough hours in the day to complete all the tasks set before us on a daily basis."

Volunteers are needed in a wide range of services from typing and computer skills to painters and "clean up crews." The EST is developing a list of volunteer services needed. The list should be available in mid-March with hopes of volunteers being ready to start work in late March. Persons interested in volunteering should contact the Baptist Headquarters for a "Volunteers List" and application. Following review of the application and a recommendation from the volunteer's pastor, a brief orientation will take place and work can begin.

It is hoped that a spirit of volunteerism will encourage persons from across the state to get involved in the missions work of the General Baptist State Convention. Due to planned technology upgrades, it will eventually be possible for some volunteers to "work at home" from anywhere in the state and transfer completed work assignments electronically by way of the World Wide Web.

Potential volunteers should contact the Executive Secretary-Treasurer at gbscgray@bellsouth.net or at 919/821-7466, Extension 13. ■

Kick-off State Missions Campaign

Dr. E. B. Turner, Pastor of Lumberton's First Baptist Church and Moderator of Lumber River Missionary Baptist Association, has reported the first contribution for a special State Missions Campaign during the month of February. The Baptist Headquarters has announced an immediate need for state missions dollars. Contributions for State Missions fund the operations and programs of the General Baptist State Convention. Each member of the General Board and Executive Committee have been asked to be responsible for at least $500.00 for State Missions during the month of February.

The Executive Secretary-Treasurer was invited to First Baptist Church and Lumber River Association at the end of January. After informing Dr. Turner (also a past president of the General Baptist State Convention) of the State Missions needs and plans to announce a campaign for February, First Baptist Church made a contribution of $500.00 and Lumber River Association made a contribution of $1,500.00.

President Charles T. Bullock (Chairman of the Executive Committee) and Vice President-at-Large John H. Grant (Chairman of the General Board) both challenge the members of the Committee and Board to answer the call with a special contribution for State Missions during the month of February. ■

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Benefits of Board Self-Assessment

By Dr. John H. Grant,
Vice President At Large

Proposals from various consultants for a General Board self-assessment process have been received and are under review. A self-assessment process will strengthen and enhance the work of our Convention by providing General Board members with specific opportunities to reflect on their individual and corporate responsibilities.

Dr. John H. **Grant**

Additionally, the self-assessment process is designed to identify different perceptions and opinions among board members. This process of identification of perceptions will point to questions and issues that need the Board's attention. Of course, our goal would be to use the questions and issues raised would be a "springboard" for improvement.

Ultimately, the hope of the self-assessment tool is to increase the level of teamwork among members of the General Board. Teamwork will be achieved as the Board clarifies the role of the General Board, the role of the staff, and identifies those areas of mutual Board and staff responsibilities. For a significant time, our Convention has been focused on increasing accountability. The self-assessment process will reinforce the serious organizational value of accountability. In time, credibility will be established (or re-established) with GBSC Churches and other external audiences as a direct result of the self-assessment process.

With the completed self-assessment, the General Board will be challenged to look internally in addition to assessing Convention leadership and programs. As this happens, God will be glorified by our helping "to put in order the things that are wanting."

I am looking forward to helping the General Board move through the self-assessment process and I am anxious to see the inevitable positive results for the General Baptist State Convention as a result of our self-assessment process.

The next meeting of the General Board has been scheduled for **March 24, 2005 at the Lewis Chapel Baptist Church in Fayetteville.** Please note that the following General Board meeting schedule is subject to change. Members will receive written notice of any changes in the *Baptist Informer* and by letter from the Chairman.

Please note the following meeting schedule:

- April 21, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. — Bear Creek Baptist Association Building (Goldsboro)
- May 2, 2005 at 1:00 p.m. — St. Stephens Baptist Church (Elizabeth City)
- June 23, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. — Mount. Zion Baptist Church (Asheville)
- July 21, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. — Friendship Missionary Baptist Church (Charlotte)
- September 22, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. — Mount Zion First Baptist Church (Rocky Mount)

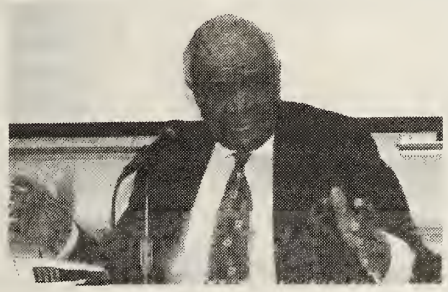
Preaching Statesman Joins Divinity School Faculty

The Shaw University Divinity School is pleased to welcome the world celebrated, and sought after, Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, Senior Pastor Emeritus of The Concord Baptist Church of Christ (Brooklyn, New York) as the Shaw University Divinity School Distinguished Professor of Homiletics. Dr. Taylor's presence at Shaw is a part of the Divinity School's two-fold commitment to train clergy for leadership while developing a school of excellence for preachers. Both objectives are expressed in the University's motto **"Strides to Excellence: Only the Best!"**

Named one of "The Fifteen Greatest Preachers" by *Ebony Magazine*, Dr. Taylor was presented the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, by President William Jefferson Clinton, on August 9, 2000. His international honors include being named Knight Commander, Order of African Redemption by President William V.S. Tubman of the Republic of Liberia in 1969. Liberian President William R. Tolbert, Jr. later conferred the Order of Africa honor in 1973.

From 1948-1990, Dr. Taylor served as Pastor of The Concord Baptist Church of Christ in Brooklyn, New York. Within that span of time, over nine thousand members were added to the Church. He also served as Pastor of Bethany Baptist Church (Elyria, Ohio), Beulah Baptist Church (New Orleans, Louisiana), and Mount Zion Baptist Church (Baton Rouge, Louisiana). Dr. Taylor's leadership has brought forth the creation of The Concord Baptist Church Elementary School, Nursing Home, Clothing Exchange, Federal Credit Union, Seniors Resident, and the Concord Baptist Christ Fund while at Concord Baptist Church of Christ.

Dr. Taylor, a premier lecturer on preaching, has committed to train, teach and impart excellence into the Shaw University Divinity School students. A special class, ***"The Preaching of Gardner C. Taylor,"*** designed by Dr. Reginald Van Stephens (Assistant Professor of Homiletics) and Dr. J. T. Roberson (Dean of Shaw University Divinity School) allows Dr. Taylor to share his gifts and talents with the Divinity School students. Introduced in the current term, Dr. Taylor's focus in the class is on contemporary preaching. An emphasis of the course, according to Dean Robertson, is studying "the hermeneutical DNA on the individual uniqueness of a sermon" by giving attention to exegesis, exposition, social needs, preparation and delivery of the sermon. "Through these lenses, students are capturing the methods of his excellence in preaching and his preaching methodology as he engages them in the classroom," says Dean Robertson. The classroom setting has been organized and is structured around a dialogical approach to the learner so that the students are able to ask questions designed to initiate dialogue on preaching.



Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, now a resident of Wake County, NC, and on the faculty of Shaw University Divinity School raises a point during a lecture.

Dr. Gardner C. Taylor puts the "power in preaching" and is considered by many to be the greatest living African American preacher. Dr. Clarence G. Newsome, President of Shaw University, has welcomed Dr. Taylor's presence. "God is up to something! God has allowed greatness to be in the midst of us," says President Newsome. "We are eternally blessed that Dr. Taylor has agreed to grace us with his presence," says Doris Sanders, a Shaw University Divinity School student. "I'm so grateful that God ordered my steps to the Shaw Divinity School. The anointing is so powerful in Dr. Taylor's class that I feel both humbled and inspired realizing that my ministerial development is profoundly enhanced by infusions of Dr. Taylor's wisdom. The opportunity to study the art of preaching with the 'Michelangelo of Homiletics,' is a divine appointment in the realms of education and impartation," says Sherri L. Arnold Graham, Graduate Student Government Association (GSGA) Vice-President.

As a preacher/teacher, Dr. Taylor's contributions span both national and international arenas. He is the author of many books and public writings including Best *Sermon* (1959); *Preaching Biblically*; *The Cry of Freedom*; Presbyterian Journal (Interpretation), *"Some Musings On A Nation Under God"*; and Harvard Divinity Bulletin, *"Climbing Jacob's Ladder"* (1993). He wrote *The Words of Gardner Taylor* - Six Volumes (Judson); *How Shall They Preach*, 1976 Lyman Beecher Lectures, Yale University; *The Scarlet Thread* 1981; *Chariots Aflame*, 1988; and *We Have This Ministry* (with The Reverend Samuel Proctor) 1996.

Dr. Taylor has shared his greatness in preaching knowledge at some of the nation's most prominent universities and seminaries. He has lectured at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Harvard Divinity School, Union Theological Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, Southern Baptist Seminary, Eastern Baptist Seminary, Southeastern Baptist Seminary, Louisville Presbyterian Seminary, Yale Divinity School, Atlantic Christian College, Southwester Baptist Seminary, and Princeton Theological Seminary. Shaw University Divinity School is now added to that list of hosting seminaries for Dr. Taylor's lectures. Additionally, the Gardner C. Taylor Lectures are an annual event at Duke Divinity School sponsored by the Office of Black Church Studies and the Black Seminarians Union.

Dr. Taylor is a former member of the General Council of the American Baptist Convention and a Past President, of the Progressive National Baptist Convention. He has been featured in the *New York Times, Ebony Magazine, Newsday, and Newsweek*. In a Baylor University survey in 1996, Dr. Taylor was named one of the "Twelve Most Effective Preachers In The English Speaking World".

In announcing Dr. Taylor's coming to Raleigh, Shaw University Divinity School heralded its pride and appreciation at having "the personification of excellence in preaching or, as some have referred to him, 'the prince of preachers,' to be a faculty member at our school. We believe his presence will steer us toward "Excellence in Preaching" as we are committed to "Only the Best!"

Thanks to Wells and Gray

By Dr. Howard W. Parker, Jr.,
First Vice President

Dr. Howard
Parker, Jr.

The year 2004 was the "best of times" and yet "the worst of times" for the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina. It has been the best of times inasmuch as the GBSC membership has learned to come closer together in Christ. Conversely, it has been the worst of times for financial reasons. The bad news that our Convention has not been on solid financial ground (as we would have had it to be) for some time troubled us. Because we now know the amount of funds needed to support our operations as a Convention as we seek to raise funds for the objectives of our convention, we face a great challenge.

2004..... best of times?

Finding ourselves without an Executive Secretary-Treasurer last year greatly increased the workload of our President, Dr. Charles T. Bullock, and the staff at the Baptist Headquarters. Not only did the daily operations of the Convention have to continue uninterrupted, but also the relationships within our Baptist family had to be maintained throughout the state and the nation.

At a time when businesses are downsizing and good paying jobs are few, funds at the local Church level have reduced in tithes and offerings due the exporting of American jobs in North Carolina and across nationwide. The challenge for the Convention was and is, "How do we reach the masses and assist with the their NEEDS?"

In the midst of these and other concerns, our Executive Committee Members asked The Reverend Reginald A. Wells to serve as Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer. Rev. Wells traveled the state and represented our Convention on the national level. Rev. Wells' plate was already full, being a husband, a father, Pastor of the New Christian Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Rose Hill and a Duplin County Commissioner. Following the November 2 elections, Rev. Wells was named Chairman of the Duplin County Commissioners. Despite the man demands on his schedule, he made room for one more item. We are so very proud of his valued work for Kingdom building in reaching the masses.

Thank you, Rev. Reginald A. Wells, for serving the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina with distinction.

January 1, 2005 marked the beginning of the tenure of our new Executive Secretary-Treasurer in the person of The Reverend Haywood T. Gray. Rev. Gray comes to us from the Temple Memorial Baptist Church of High Point. He is a former Fourth Vice President of the GBSC. In 1992, he published his first book, *"A Ministry of Service, A Ministry of Joy"*, which has become the official manual for Ushers in General Baptist State Convention.

We pledge our support, prayers and finances as The Rev. Haywood T. Gray takes the realm of leadership as the new Executive Secretary/Treasurer of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc. Thank you, Rev. Haywood T. Gray, for coming to us at such a time as this. ■

Baptists Challenged to Shine

By Rev. Nilous M. Avery, II,
Second Vice President

"To the [General Baptist Family] of God in [North Carolina], to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ —- their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 1:2-3, NIV).

Jesus' statement in Matthew 5:14 rings loudly in my ears: "You are the light of the world." When we carefully and prayerfully examine this statement, it is clearly a bold, yet bewildering proclamation. Imagine how perplexed the listeners of Jesus' day were when they heard this profound proclamation.

Here they were, living in a land that was far removed from the awesome and magnificent power of imperial Rome. They perhaps had envisioned what the great city of their oppressor must have looked like. Rome to them was the bright light that shone upon a hill. Yet, Jesus proclaimed them (His disciples) to be "the light of the world." Could it be that Jesus already saw them wrapped in a power so awesome, so marvelous, so impressive, and so formidable that Rome's light paled in comparison? YES! Jesus knew that the power of God, which was promised to those who trusted and followed Him, could and would achieve what no other power in existence could! Jesus proclaimed this promise several times. Look at it in two specific passages: "I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:49, NIV) "... Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about ... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you ... ." (Acts 1:4b, 8a, NIV)

Rev. Nilous
Avery, II

Jesus was declaring that those who receive God's power would accomplish what no other power on earth could do. Through them, God's power would provide light to a world that was bound by the darkness of lesser powers. Through them, God's light would enable, equip, and empower them to be witnesses of Christ, even "to the ends of the earth." The light of Rome was no match for the promised power that the disciples would receive in order to serve as the light of the world.

The same is true today. My sisters and brothers in Christ, YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! This is the promise of Christ from Christ to all who trust and follow the Lord. We receive this world-illuminating power from God through an intimate companionship and communion with the once crucified, but now risen Christ! That's it! That is why the Apostle Paul could exclaim with confidence: "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20, NIV)

With this power: · we overcome weakness because God's power works through human weakness; we are rescued and healed; thus, we become rescuers and healers because God's power rescues and heals those who are handcuffed in the ruins of destructive experiences; we become a Christian community which reaches out to the least, the lost, those who are left out, looked over, and let down because God's power strengthens Christian communities. YOU ARE THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD! General Baptists, we are the light of the world. Everything we do has but one purpose: to GLORIFY GOD & EDIFY OTHERS. We are a faith community that is powered by the Holy Spirit. As such, we are challenged by our Lord to grow UPWARD, INWARD, and OUTWARD. In responding to Jesus' proclamation of our illuminating power, we must embrace the call to become witnesses in action. (Matthew 25:31-40)

The opportunity is available for us to shine. The ministry of foreign missions is a vehicle that provides the glorious opportunity for God's light to shine in us. Shine today through your gifts of time, talent, treasure, your temple (your physical being), and your testimony. Shine today —- turn on your light by supporting the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission ministries. Shine today by contacting me ! ■

The God of Jacob

By Reverend Ricky L. Banks,
Fourth Vice President

Rev. Ricky
Banks

"The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge." (Psalm 46:11).

It was not safe to be Jacob's friend, brother, or even his father. Jacob was a selfish, ambitious young man whose greedy mind was more active than his good conscience. He was clever at deception, an adroit actor, and a coward. Quick to take a mean advantage of another person, he was also quick to run away when in danger. Then, in his fear and loneliness, he prayed, and even tried to make a bargain with God. "If he will do something special for me, I will be very generous with him" was the spirit of Jacobs's prayer. Indeed, he seemed to believe trickery and dishonesty a good policy.

We cannot, however, with good grace be severe with Jacob. In fact, it is not quite safe for us to point an accusing finger at him. For while we are doing that, some neighbor, or perhaps some member of our family, might have a finger leveled at us. It becomes us to handle Jacob with sympathy, because he and we are very much alike!

Then as we read the words "the God of Jacob," their meaning suddenly becomes clear. Weak cowardly, sinful Jacob — yet God claimed him, and changed him. God hated Jacob's ways, but he did not hate Jacob. Doubtless, he hates our foolish motives and sinful acts, yet he calls us to him and forgives us when we come. "The God of Jacob is our refuge."

On behalf of our Central Children's Home, I thank you again this month for your support and prayers. The Central Children's Home is in desperate need of financial support so we are counting on you while we await a report from the accreditation team. ■

GRAY, Cont'd From Page 2

small church in a small rural community to rise to such a high level in the state convention," Gray recalls. "There was strong support from all across the state and I made some lifelong friends in the months leading up to that election."

He chose not to seek higher office after his tenure as Fourth Vice President. "That was a tough decision for me," remembers Gray. "But the reality set in that it would be difficult for me to continue to ask our congregation to support me financially to meet the growing demands of holding statewide office. I literally had to choose between spending more money for missions and spending more money to support my presidential aspirations. I chose missions." After leaving the presidential line-up, he focused his attention on local issues. He was twice elected to the Caswell County Board of Education and served a term as Moderator of Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Association. His tenure as Moderator was marked by growth and change. At the end of his term, 100% of the Churches were participating in and supporting the Association. He led the Association to build a new, state-of-the-art, $800,000.00 childcare facility licensed to serve 150 children.

In 1998, he accepted the call of the Temple Memorial Baptist Church in High Point to become their fifth pastor.

EXT Gray makes stirring acceptance speech at MLK Banquet. He reminded that Convention of the positive and pure power of the word "Shall".

About Temple Memorial, Gray says, "it was definitely a Church in crisis – struggling spiritually, in trouble financially, and in need of renewal and revival." When queried on why he felt such strong hope in the possibilities of what Temple Memorial could become, he says that he was touched by the goodness of the people there. "Good people plus a great God always spell success," Gray says.

Within two years, the Church's financial standing had been restored and new models for accountability had been instituted. More than three hundred people joined the Church in his seven-year tenure. By the time that he resigned in November 2004, the entire Church debt has been retired and Church budget had peaked at almost triple the budget the Church operated under when he arrived. Of his proudest accomplishments in High Point, Gray points to leading his Church to make missions central to who they were as a Church. "We actually became a Missionary Baptist Church in more than just name; we were Missionary Baptist because of what our beliefs called us to do," he says. The Church's missions allocation grew from less than 2% of the Church budget in 1997 to almost 18% of the budget in 2004. Eight missionary groups were active with each having "hands on" involvement in a missions focus. "If my experience in Pelham taught me pastoral and community skills," Gray says, "then it is clear that God led me to High Point to sharpen my administrative skills and to heighten my passion for missions."

Dr. David C. Forbes, Sr., (center) pastor of the new EST, presents a check for $3,000 for State Missions at MLK Banquet. The donation from the Christian Faith Baptist Church (Raleigh) was given to celebrate Gray's election as EST. President Bullock (left) looks on.

If you ask him of his proudest personal accomplishments, he is quick to respond, but his answer may surprise some. He does not point to any particular season of ministry, but to his pride in his four sons. He "adopted" three teenage boys in his Pelham congregation and provided for their support and growth into men. His oldest is a firefighter in High Point, his middle son is enlisted in the U. S. Navy, and his youngest is a minister in Arkansas. "I'm so grateful to God for my sons, daughters-in-law and seven grandchildren," he says with a broad grin. "They have brought such special meaning to my life in wonderfully, extraordinary ways. I just hope that I've been as good a dad to them as they have been sons, daughters, and grandkids to me." After coming to High Point, his family grew as he added a fourth son to his family circle who is now a graduate student in Durham.

When asked of his priorities for his new role of Executive Secretary-Treasurer, he lists stabilizing the Convention's financial standing at the top of his list. "If we do not quickly bring our financial house in order, we will threaten our ability to do missions in this State." Beyond that, he wants to establish the necessary controls to insure that funds designated for objectives are forwarded in a timely manner. He realizes that increasing efficiency and widening accountability are high on his list of "things to do." Developing clear operational and administrative policies as well as updating the technology under which the Baptist Headquarters operates are high priority items. "Helping our Convention find new ways to do the old things of Christian education, missions and benevolence is going to be the bulk of my contribution as Executive Secretary-Treasurer," Gray indicates.

He moved to Raleigh just four days before the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet. On the Sunday before his first full-time day on the job, he united with Christian Faith Baptist Church in Raleigh. "I literally had a Church home before I had signed a lease on my house and before I had keys to my office in the Baptist Headquarters, but that's just how I wanted it to be," Gray states. Just before making the move from High Point, he realized that January would be the first time in almost forty years that he was not connected to a Church. "That thought scared me – literally scared me – and I knew that I had to be in a Church quick, fast, and in a hurry." He reports that Dr. David C. Forbes, Sr. and Christian Faith have been a wonderfully welcoming and supportive Church family and that he is benefiting greatly from being affiliated with that congregation.

When asked how his first month as full-time Executive Secretary-Treasurer has gone, he breaks into hearty laughter. "Outside the fact that I still have not completely unpacked and that I still get a little confused on some of the one way streets in downtown Raleigh, I think I'm doing pretty well," he quips. "The good people of the Convention have been so warm and welcoming that I have to keep telling myself that this is not a dream. I am so looking forward to meeting them and working with them to make our Convention the strongest witness for Christ and missions in the nation." He is busy at doing just that. In his first month on the job, he has already logged almost 2,200 miles, traveling the state, meeting with General Baptists, and reflecting on how far he's come from the "backwoods of Southern Virginia."

(NOTE: The first two administrative leaders of the Convention (G. W. Watkins and J. H. Moore) had the title of General Secretary. W. C. Somerville was the first full-time Executive Secretary-Treasurer. C. E. Griffin, Thomas Kilgore, O. L. Sherrill (who was also known as "Mr. Baptist"), C. C. Craig (who was known as the first "million dollar Executive Secretary-Treasurer), and A. D. Logan, Jr. followed Sommerville in the office of Executive Secretary-Treasurer. O.S. Bullock and Reginald A. Wells have both served as Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurers; Bullock in 1940 and Wells in 2004.)

Godly Love Behavior

By Dr. Priscilla Brodie
Executive Secretary-Treasurer

May we express our appreciation to God and you for the blessings of our One-Day Session in January.

Dr. Julias **McDonald**

February usually is known as love month, as well as African-American History. How great a little word is L-O-V-E, only four letters. Yet God's Word says much about L-O-V-E. Inasmuch as this month relates to love, this may be a time to cause us to examine our "Love Walk". We are told God is love; we are told to love God and to love our neighbor; we are told God loves us. One of the most known scriptures which can help us to examine and evaluate our "Love Walk" with the aid of the Holy Spirit follows in part:

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 – "Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up, does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away." – NKJV

Having read this Word of God, should we pray that God will help us manifest more of His love so that He can use us more effectively to evangelize the family and to serve the present age in any other ways He sets forth by His Holy Spirit?

And so the hymnologist, Elizabeth Prentiss, says in the following song:

"MORE LOVE TO THEE"

More love to Thee, O Christ. More love to Thee!
Hear Thou the prayer I make On bended knee;
This is my earnest plea:
More love, O Christ, to Thee,
More love to Thee, More love to Thee!

And in keeping with observance of our history month, let us reflect on the old Negro Spiritual"

"LORD, I WANT TO BE A CHRISTIAN"

Lord, I want to be more loving In my heart, in my heart;
Lord, I want to be more loving In my heart

HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!

Reminders

Self-Denial Envelopes. Please write to the Woman's Convention, P. O. Box 1818, Raleigh, N.C. 27602 in order to receive these. Or email your request to wbhfmc@wbh-fmc.org.

Housing Reservation Forms. Please contact the Woman's Convention, P. O. Box 1818, Raleigh, NC 27602 for the 121st Annual Session WBHFMC forms.

State-Wide Leaders Workshop (April 2, 2005). Pre-Registration forms will be mailed to Circle, Union, and Auxiliary Presidents, and District Conference Chairpersons during the month of February. Pre-registration will be **$5.00; on-site, $6.00.** Pre-registration deadline is March 11, 2005. Please contact us if you do not receive this information.

Food Bank of North Carolina. The Young Adult Department of the Woman's Convention will coordinate a food drive April 2, 2005, State-Wide Workshop Session, at the Raleigh Civic Center. Please bring all types of non-perishable food items. (Be sure to monitor the expiration date.) Please do not bring items in glass containers.

Website. Please review the website of the Woman's Convention at www.wbh-fmc.org.

The 2004-2005 Budget is in the amount of $819,055.00 which will be distributed among the objectives: State Missions, $578,154.00; Foreign Missions, $80,901.00; Shaw University, $49,500.00; Shaw Divinity School, $33,500.00; Central Children Home, $36,500.00 and Baptist Assembly, $40,500.00. Check and money orders should be made payable to the Woman's Baptist State Convention & Woman's Baptist Home & Foreign Missionary Convention, P. O. Box 1818, Raleigh, NC 27602. PLEASE send generous funds now in particular for State Missions. THANKS TO GOD AND TO YOU in advance for responding to this our great need in order to implement His mission effectively.

Dr. Priscilla **Brodie**

Quotas. 2004-2005 quotas have been sent. Please contact our office immediately if you have not received your circle/church quota.

The Nehemiah Prayer Chain

of the
Woman's Baptist Home &
Foreign Missionary Convention
North Carolina, Auxiliary to GBSC

Enlistment Form

The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord; but the prayer of the upright is his delight. (Proverbs 15:8)

Confess your faults to one another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. (James 5:16)

Name_____
(Organization or Individual)

Mailing Address_____

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District_____ Group_____

Department_____
(Senior, Young, Adult, or Youth)

Chairperson - Mr. Robbie Diggs *Co-Chairperson* - Mrs. Colene Stanley

(Please return to the Office within seven (7) days)
Woman's State Baptist Convention

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Submitted by Dianne Newell
President Congress of Christian Education

Class Sessions/ Curriculum Textbooks

Diane **Newell**

February 12, 2005 • One Day Session

DIVISION 1: Ministerial Development

Class: ***Characteristics of Expository Preaching***
Textbook: ***The Treasury of Scripture Knowledge***
ISBN # 0-917-00622-4

Class: ***Seminar for New Pastors and Ministers***
Textbook: ***We Have This Ministry***
Author: Samuel Proctor & Gardner C. Taylor; ISBN # 701248

DIVISION 2: Leadership Development

Class: ***Re-Thinking Christian Education***
Textbook: ***2005 Christian Education Handbook***
Author: Bruce P. Powers
ISBN # 0-8054-1060-0

Class: ***Revitalizing the Church's B.T.U.***
Textbook: ***God's Transforming Spirit: Black Church Renewal***
Author: Preston Robert Washington
ISBN # 701129

Class: ***Vacation Bible School Clinic***
Textbook: ***VBS Smart Pages***
Gospel Light; ISBN # 0-8307-1671-8

DIVISION 3: The Sunday School

Class: ***How to Grow An Effective Sunday School***
Textbook: ***Essentials for Excellence***
Author: Alan Raughton & Louis B. Hanks; ISBN # 0-6330-8918-4

DIVISION 4: Teacher Training and Development

Class: ***Ministering to Adult Students***
Textbook: ***Teaching Adults – A Guide for Transformational Teaching***

Author: Rick Edwards
ISBN # 0633008451

Class: ***Ministering to High School Students (Grades 9-12)***
Textbook: ***Teaching Youth - Leaders, Lessons And Lifestyles***
Authors: Allen Jackson & Richard Barnes; ISBN # 06330008443

Class: ***Ministering to Middle School Students (Grades 6-8)***
Textbook: ***Teaching Youth - Leaders, Lessons And Lifestyles***
Authors: Allen Jackson & Richard Barnes; ISBN #A 0633008443

Class: ***Ministering to Older Elementary School Students (Grades 3-5)***
Textbook: ***Teaching Children – Laying Foundations of Faith***
Authors: Chris Ward, David Morrow & Anne Tonks; ISBN # 0633008435

Class: ***Ministering to Younger Elementary Students (Grades 1-2)***
Textbook: ***Teaching Children – Laying Foundations of Faith***
Authors: Chris Ward, David Morrow & Anne Tonks; ISBN # 0633008435

Class: ***Ministering to Preschool Students (Pre K- Kindergarten)***
Textbook: ***Teaching Preschoolers – First Steps Toward Faith***
Authors: Thomas Sanders & Mary Ann Bradberry; ISBN # 0633008427

DIVISION 5: Youth Ministry

Class: ***Oratorical Contest Interest***
Textbook: Instructor's Handout

DIVISION 6: Biblical & General Studies

Class: ***The Psalms***
Textbook: ***Discovering the Psalms - Passion, Promise & Praise***
Author: Donald L. Griggs
ISBN # 1-882236-16-5

Class: ***The Life and Teachings of Jesus***
Textbook: ***The Life And Teachings of Jesus Christ***
Author: James S. Stewart
ISBN # 715207-05-9

DIVISION 7: Music Ministry

Class: ***Developing Your Music Ministry***
Textbook: Instructor's Handout

DIVISION 8: Youth Division

Youth Assembly Program assigned at the time.

The 25th Pastoral Anniversary Celebration of Pastor James L. Smith, M.Div. & First Lady Hazeline T. Smith "Celebrating 25 Years of Excellence"

Kindness, compassion and the spirit of generosity set the tone for the 25th Pastoral Anniversary Celebration, honoring the Senior Pastor of Palmer Grove Baptist Church, Pastor James L. Smith, M.Div. and his lovely First Lady, Hazelene Terrill-Smith. The celebration was held on the first Sunday in January, January 2, 2005 with the Morning Celebration beginning @ 11:00 a.m. with Dr. Robert E. Devoe, Senior Pastor of the New Canaan Memorial Baptist Church, Shelby, NC and the evening celebration beginning @ 5 p.m. with the Rev. Ronnie Williams, Senior Pastor of the Generostee Baptist Church, Anderson, South Carolina.

"God Counted Him Faithful" I Timothy 1:11-13, was the theme for this auspicious occasion. Pastor Les Howard, Senior Pastor of the Galilee Baptist Church, Blacksburg, SC and one of Pastor Smith's sons of the gospel served as the Master of Ceremony for the evening celebration. Minister James Wiley, Jr., the Palmer Grove Praise Ministry and the J. L. Smith Mass Choir provided the music for the celebration. The Pastor's Aid Ministry, church and guests presented gifts. His son, Omar Smith & Friends honored the couple with a special musical tribute. A special edition Pastoral Anniversary Souvenir Journal was also presented by the Pastor's Aid Ministry.

Embracing the pulpit for the celebration included Senior Pastor Billy Houze of First Baptist Lawndale, NC, Pastor Robert Moore, Pastor of Green Creek Baptist Church, Tryon, NC, Pastor Charles Webber, Pastor of Haynes Grove Baptist Church, Cliffside, NC; Pastor Vincent Ross, Pastor of Maiden Chapel Baptist Church, Maiden, NC; Retired Pastor Walter B. Ellis, Pastor Ray Lockhart, Senior Pastor of the Ellis Chapel Baptist Church, Patterson Springs, NC; Bishop Zavier Terrill, Sr., Senior Pastor of the New Jerusalem Rebirth & Restoration Ministries, Inc., Shelby, NC; Rev. Albert Hillman, Minister Deborah Thurman, Minister Linda Braziel and Youth Pastor Eddie Williams, all of Palmer Grove Baptist Church, Kingstown, NC and Elder Kenneth Smith, Pastor of the Broken Heart Ministries, Inc., Shelby, NC. Also among the participants included in the celebration was Pastor Smith's aunts, Mrs. Myrtle Smith-Ellis and Mrs. Earlene Smith-Baxter, both of Shelby, NC, along with his brothers, sisters and cousins.

Pastor James L. Smith is the multi-gifted Pastor, Administrator, Lecturer, Educator, Governmental Consultant and Advisor, addressing critical issues affecting every aspect of Human, Social and Spiritual development. Pastor Smith serves as a founding member of the "Closing The Gap" Core Group, which improves minority and at-risk student achievement in Cleveland County. He is the 3rd Vice Moderator of the Ebenezer Baptist Association and on the Ordaining Council. He is an elected official of the North Carolina State Baptist Convention and serves on the Evangelism Committee of the General State Convention of North Carolina. He is a member of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc.

Pastor James L. Smith has erected through divine direction a powerful ministry which includes 21 ministries within the church structure, with expansions being added on at a frequent and consistent basis. Pastor Smith is a graduate of Shelby High School, he holds an Associate Religion Degree from the Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute in Hendersonville, NC, a Bachelor of Religion Degree from Mid-Atlantic Bible College in Rock Hill, SC, and a Master of Divinity Degree from the Gardner-Webb University School of Divinity, Boiling Springs, NC. He has also done Study Tours in Israel, Egypt, Turkey, Asia Minor and Greece. He is listed as a Board Member of the Y.M.C.A. of Shelby, NC.

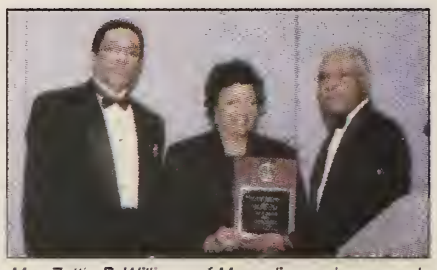
Pastor Smith is married to the former Hazelene Terrill, who is the Area Operations Manager for B.B. & T. Bank in Shelby, North Carolina. They are the proud parents of Shon, Omar, and Ebony and they have two daughters-in-law, Dena, and Alicia. They are the proud grandparents of Jamelle, Raven, Omar James, and Omarie.

THIS IS A PAID ADVERTISEMENT.

Feb. 2005/1t

Legends Honored at MLK Banquet

Dr. James Donald Ballard, Dr. Elbert Lee, Jr., and Mrs. Zettie B. Williams were the 2005 recipients of the Presidential Award giving at this year's Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet. Each year, the General Baptist State Convention recognizes persons across the state that have distinguished themselves in ministry and service. This year's honorees are "living legends" and collectively represent more than one hundred twenty-five years of preaching, advocacy, and service.



Mrs. Zettie B. Williams of Magnolia receives award for education and community service. She is flanked by Vice President-at-large Grant (left) and President Bullock (right).

Dr. Elbert Lee, Jr. of Rocky Mount receives award for gerontology and seniors advocacy. From left to right are Vice President-at-large Grant, Lee, and President Bullock.

The Reverend Dr. James Donald Ballard, the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Presidential Award Recipient for Demonstrated Excellence in Preaching and Pastoral Leadership, has preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ for forty-nine years. For forty-five of those years, he was the imminent Senior Pastor of the United Metropolitan Baptist Church of Winston-Salem. With conviction in the face of doubt and courage in the proximity of fear, Dr. Ballard has had a distinguished and sterling ministry.

Dr. J. Donald Ballard of Pfafftown (ctr.) receives award for preaching and pastoral leadership from GBSC President Charles T. Bullock (right). GBSC Vice President-at-large John Grant (left) looks on.

From modest beginnings in High Point, NC, he has followed the Lord's leading to come to a vaunted place among the preaching legends of North Carolina. A proud graduate of Shaw University, he went on to further his education at Duke University (where he was the first African-American student to attend the Duke Divinity School) and Winston-Salem State University.

Dr. Ballard has had a wide and varied array of life experiences: an Air Force veteran, a public school teacher, a university chaplain, a pastor, a husband, father, and now grandfather.

In our General Baptist Convention, Dr. Ballard is one of the pillars that support the weight of our Christian challenge. Not only a Board member of our Convention, he sits on the General Boards of both Lott Carey and the National Baptist Convention.

The Reverend Dr. Elbert Lee, Jr., the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Presidential Award Recipient for Acclaimed Distinction in Advocacy for Seniors and Gerontology Research, has advocated on behalf of the aging citizens of North Carolina for more than thirty years. What began as a family care home in Rocky Mount has now become a passion for Dr. Lee and has culminated in his elevation to the position of Director of the Institute of Gerontological Studies.

A native of Smithfield, NC, he is distinguished as a Senior Pastor in North Carolina. His service at Rocky Mount's North End Missionary Baptist Church and Louisburg's Perry's Chapel Baptist Church is not measured in years, but in decades.

He is a proud graduate of Shaw University as well as Virginia University and Washington Theological Baptist Seminary. Ministry has taken him to diverse places over the years including South Africa, Japan and South Korea.

Attend a Baptist Convention and you will likely see him in some place of prominence. Whether it is the General Baptist Convention, or the Progressive National Baptist Convention, or the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Missionary Convention, this preacher / teacher / leader is always sharing his knowledge and his passion for the things of God.

Governor Easley has appointed him to serve on the NC Teachers' and State Employees Comprehensive Major Medical Plan Board of Trustees. Rounding out his vitae is the fact that he is a husband, father, a grandfather and a great grandfather.

There are persons who give themselves to worthy causes for a season. There are others to give their lives to worthy causes. Such is the case with Mrs. Zettie B. Williams, the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Presidential Award Recipient for Exemplary Leadership in Education and Community Service.

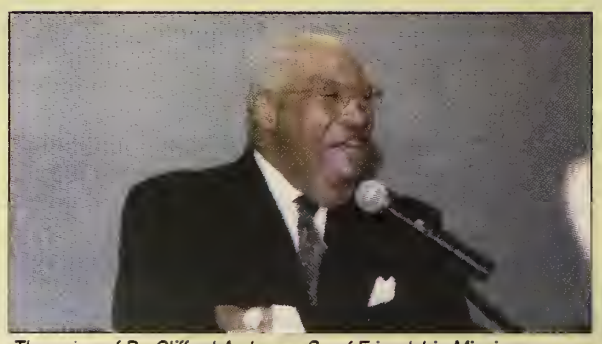
For more than forty years, she gave herself to young people through the public schools. She is the kind of teacher whose lessons were both in books and by example. Her students learned lifelong skills from her gentle nature, her demands for excellence, and for the persistent way she always made her students feel that they were special and could do anything.

Retirement only presented larger opportunities for service. She distinguished her self by becoming the first African-American elected to the Duplin County Board of Commissioners. She chairs the Board of Trustees of James Strunt Community College in Kenansville, NC. She is such a trendsetter in education that the new Technology Building on the Strunt Campus is being named in her honor.

Seemingly never tired, she finds time to serve on both the Board of the Duplin General Hospital and a Mental Health Board.

This graduate of N. C. A&T State University and the University of New York is also a committed Christian. She is active in both the Kenansville Eastern Missionary Baptist Association and a member of the New Kenansville First Baptist Church. ■

Packed Raleigh Civic Center Celebrates King Legacy



The voice of Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr. of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte Thunders in Raleigh Civic Center bringing the banquet hall to its feet.

Banquet preacher (Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr., second from right) is joined by ministers in a light moment before Benquet begins. From left are Dr. Donaldson Jones, Rev. Norman T. Davis, President Charles T. Bullock, Jones, and Dr. C.R. Edwards.

Nearly 1,000 Banquet goers fill the Raleigh Civic Center on Friday, January 7, for the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet.

Drs. Charles T. and Shirley W. Bullock pose for the camera before Banquet opens.

Wells Recognized For Service

The Reverend Reginald A. Wells was recognized during the 2005 Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Banquet of the General Baptist State Convention for his service at Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer. President Charles T. Bullock commended wells for his service. President Bullock also presented a plaque to Reverend Wells on behalf of the General Baptist State Convention.

The Executive Committee appointed Wells Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer. He was challenged with the responsibility of managing the day-to-day operation of the Convention while the search for a permanent Executive Secretary-Treasurer was ongoing. Wells' tenure as Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer ended on December 31, 2004 after The Reverend Haywood T. Gray was elected Executive Secretary-Treasurer on November 15.

In a striking symbol of the continuity of leadership in the GBSC, Gray presented Wells for recognition by the Convention. In his presentation, Gray said that he was "personally appreciative to him for his helpfulness and openness during transition. Though I exceed his age by many years, he has treated me as a brother and as a friend and as a contemporary." Gray went on to say, "We salute his sterling sacrifice on our behalf. While serving as our Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer, he was also pastoring the growing and glowing New Christian Chapel Baptist Church of Rose Hill. During his tenure with us, he was elected Chairman of the Duplin County Board of Commissioners. While dividing his time between Rose Hill and Raleigh, he found the time to be Dr. Roxie Wells' husband and Jayln Reid's dad."

Former Interim Executive Secretary-Treasurer Wells receives plaque from GBSC President Charles T. Bullock.

GBSC Statistician Dr. A.T. Griffey (left) and Third VP Dr. Leonzo Lynch (right) congratulate Wells on his service to the Convention.

Reverend Reginald A. Wells was born on December 2, 1968 in Tuscaloosa, Alabama. In 1992, he became the seventh pastor of the New Christian Chapel Baptist Church, in Rose Hill, North Carolina. Rev. Wells has led the congregation to a holistic ministry that strives to meet the total needs of individuals, the church and community. His innovative leadership at New Christian Chapel has led him to survey the needs of the church, seize the goals of past pastors and establish new ministries to meet the needs of the congregation and community. As a result of his inspired leadership, New Christian Chapel's membership has experienced a tremendous amount of growth.

New ministries have been established through Rev. Wells' "Vision" to adequately address the needs of the church and community. Some of those ministries are comprehensive Bible Study, Academic Support Ministry, Healthcare Ministry, Senior Citizens Ministry, Audio/Video Ministry, Athletic Ministry, Family Skating night and several others. Recently, he led the congregation to construct an Athletic Complex.

Reverend Wells is married to his very supportive wife, Dr. Roxie Cannon Wells, who is a Family Practice Physician. They share in the love of one daughter, Jayln Reid.

Packed Raleigh Civic Center Celebrates King Legacy

Another scene of the many Baptists attending MLK Banquet. Attendees came from every area of the State in a festive and worshipful mood.

Banquet attendees received a surprise treat when a liturgical dance group from Martin Street Baptist Church in Raleigh performed during the festivities.

Members of the NC Baptist State Ushers Convention served as hosts and hostesses the capacity crowd at the Banquet. Ushers services were coordinated by Nancy High (far left).

Rev. F.O. Bass, Jr. and his mother, Marian H. Bass, of High Point are among the multitude enjoying the King Banquet.

Banqueteers join in the singing of the traditional civil rights era tune, "We Shall Overcome," at the conclusion of the Banquet.

Members of the Head Table join in the closing song. Pictured (left to right) are Mrs. Pamela Jones, Dr. Jasper Reed, Ms. Diane M. Newell, Mr. John Gladden, and Mrs. Hattie Eaves.

One Day Session, February 26

By Mary M. McKoy Belle, Secretary/Reporter

Greetings to all readers of the **Baptist Informer**! It is my pleasure to extend to you a Happy New Year! My Brothers and Sisters in the Ushering Ministry, it is time to begin a new year of service. During this new year you are encouraged or perhaps even challenged to devote more time to Bible study. We need to put on the whole armor of God as we fight against the devil and the evil forces that seek to destroy us. President Eaves and your Executive Board would like to emphasize just as the Bible admonishes you, to *be thy faithful*!

Mr. Forest **Eaves**

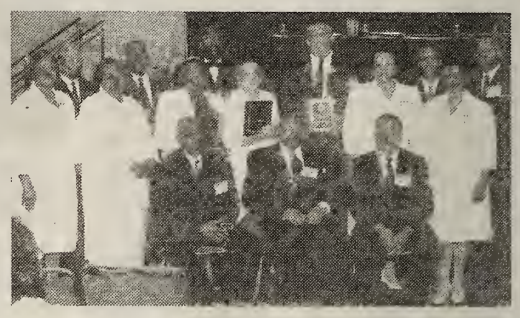
President Eaves is still improving at home following a recent hospitalization in Charlotte, N.C. The following information is given in hopes that you would send cards or correspond with him. President Eaves is serving our Ushers' Convention faithfully. Let us show our compassion and gratitude during his recovery (Mr. Forest M. Eaves, Jr., 801 Walnut Avenue, Charlotte, NC 28208-4541, phone (704) 372-5338, fax (704) 372-0014.) Let us continue to remember him in prayer as well as our dear sister, Mrs. Hattie Eaves.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Please plan now to attend our One Day Session of the North Carolina Ushers' Convention which will be held in Winston Salem, North Carolina, on Saturday, February 26, 2005.

The Johnston District Baptist Ushers' Union first quarterly meeting for the year will be held on Saturday, February 5, 2005, at the Sylvia Chapel Baptist Church in Middlesex, NC. Secondly, ushers of the Johnston District will render service during the First Fundraising Banquet for the Johnston District Missionary Baptist Association to be held at the Johnston Community College in Smithfield, NC, on Saturday, February 12, 2005, at 4:00 p.m. Dr. Reginald Wells, Interim Secretary/Treasurer for the General Baptist State Convention, will be the guest speaker.

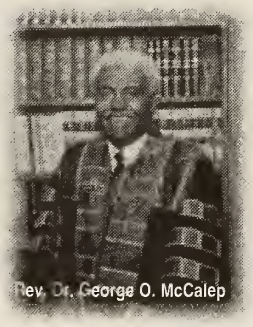
As we prepare for a new year, Chapter Nine of our Ushers' Guide, A Ministry of Service A Ministry of Joy, written by Dr. Haywood Gray of High Point, NC, is printed for your study. "North Carolina Baptist Ushers: Roots and Wings" offers information regarding the history of the North Carolina Baptist Ushers' Convention.



Please mail all information regarding your Ushering Ministry to Mary M. McKoy Belle, 316 Parkside Village Drive, Clayton, NC 27520, phone (919) 550-6841, for publication in the **Baptist Informer**. ■

McCalep Headlines 2005 Leadership Summit

The Reverend Dr. George O. McCalep is the Distinguished Lecturer for the 2005 Leadership Summit sponsored by the Ministers Council, an auxiliary of the General Baptist State Convention. The Summit will be held in Goldsboro on March 3 and 4. Dr. McCalep, now in his twenty-sixth year as Senior Pastor of the Greenforest Community Baptist Church in Decatur, Georgia, is considered a leading authority on the subjects, of Church growth, stewardship, evangelism, Church economic empowerment, Sunday school growth, and Church leadership. Under his pastorate, Greenforest has grown from "mission" status with a membership of 25 to "mega-Church" status with a membership exceeding 6,000 active persons. Greenforest operates the second largest predominately African-American Christian school in the nation. The Greenforest-McCalep Christian Academic Center enrolls 900 students in preschool through twelfth grade. The Academic Center's offerings include an $11,000,000.00 Early Learning Center providing early childhood development for 460 children aged from five weeks to five years old.



Rev. Dr. George O. McCalep

The Greenforest Community Development Corporation manages the Church's 161-unit apartment complex. The CDC has partnered with financial institutions to provide home ownership opportunities. Greenforest collaborates with neighboring Churches to operate the South DeKalb Church Federal Credit Union.

The 2005 Distinguished Lecturer holds a Ph.D. from Ohio State University. He has triple Masters degrees: a Master of Science from the University of Kansas, a Master of Divinity from Morehouse School of Religion at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, a Masters degree in Educational Administration and Supervision from John Carroll University. His undergraduate degree was earned at Alabama A & M University.

Dr. McCalep is an accomplished author. He has published twelve books including the immensely popular book, *Faithful Over A Few Things: Seven Critical Church Growth Principles.* This book has sold over 30,000 copies. He is owner of both Orman Press and Ormanpress.com. He also owns a stewardship and capital campaign consulting company, The McCalep Group.

The 2005 Leadership Summit will be held at Antioch Baptist Church (601 West Elm Street, Goldsboro). Dr. Kenneth Tate, Pastor of Antioch, is the host pastor.

In announcing the Summit, Dr. Donaldson Jones (President of the Ministers Conference) said, "African-American Baptists are increasingly becoming aware of this premier pastors conference. As always, there will be inspirational preaching and innovative teaching that will be edifying to and for clergy and lay leaders alike."

Church representation for the 2005 Summit is $200.00. Individual registration for pastors is $50.00; for associate ministers, $40.00; for deacons, $20.00; and other personal registration is $10.00 per person.

Hotel arrangements for the Summit have been made with Comfort Suites Hotel (2613 North Park Drive, Goldsboro, NC 27534). A special GBSC rate of $74.66 has been secured at this hotel. Calling the Comfort Suites Hotel at 919/759-0098 will afford attendees to secure reservations for the Summit at the GBSC rate.

All sessions will be held at Antioch Baptist Church, 601 West Elm Street. ■

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ONE DAY SESSION OF THE

NORTH CAROLINA BAPTIST USHERS' CONVENTION

Saturday, February 26, 2005

Benton Convention Center

301 West 5th Street • Winston Salem, NC 27101

8:00 A.M. Registration

Host Church: Greater First United Baptist Church

1409 Deep River Road, High Point, NC 27260

Host Pastor: Reverend William Fails

Guest Speaker: Dr. A. T. Griffey, III, Pastor

Mount Carmel Baptist Church • Winston Salem, NC

Ushers: Forsyth County Ushering Ministry

Shaw Divinity Announces 32nd Annual Ministers Conference in March

The Shaw University Divinity School has announced that the 32nd Annual James Z. Alexander/Albert W. Pegues Ministers' Conference will be held on the Shaw University campus on March 14-16, 2005. This year's Conference gathers under the theme, "The Forgotten Power of Preaching." In announcing the Conference, Dr. Rudolph Tripp (SUDS Director of Continuing Education) says, "The state of our country and the world is of such that the cry for solid preaching of the Gospel is paramount."

This year's Conference has a stellar collection of presenters including Dr. Vashti McKenzie, Bishop of the Thirteenth Episcopal District of the AME Church in Nashville, Tennessee. Bishop McKenzie will preach during the Opening Worship Session on Monday, March 14. Dr. Darrel Rollins, Pastor of Richmond, Virginia's 31st Street Baptist Church, will preach on Tuesday morning, March 15, and again on Wednesday morning, March 16. Dr. Leonzo D. Lynch, Pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Charlotte, will preach on Tuesday night, March 15 and again on Wednesday afternoon, March 16. A workshop on Bible Usage is slated for Wednesday morning, March 16. Dr. Joseph V. Crockett, Director of Research of Domestic Ministries with the American Bible Society in New York City is the workshop presenter. Rounding out the circle of participants is The Reverend Phyllis Yvonne Murphy who will preach the Distinguished Alumni sermon on Tuesday morning, March 15. Reverend Murphy is pastor of New Metropolitan Faith Winners Baptist Church, Inc. in Durham.

In an effort to enhance preaching skills, the 2005 Ministers Conference will feature a Preaching Clinic featuring Dr. Gardner C. Taylor, Adjunct Professor of Homiletics at Shaw University Divinity School. Dr. Taylor will lead a two-part clinic on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning. Special certificates will be awarded to persons participating in the Preaching Clinic. In a unique offering, the Divinity School is offering this Preaching Clinic by video conferencing to CAPE sites across the state.

Early registration continues through March 10. Early registrations received by the cutoff date are $85.00. Seminary students may register early for $45.00. After March 10, registration is $100.00 and seminary students who register after March 10 will pay $50.00. (Persons seeking registration as seminary students must provide proof of enrollment.) Individuals seeking only to participate by video conferencing at CAPE sites across the state will need to pay $25.00 to register.

Continuing Education Units are being offered for participation in the Ministers Conference. The C.E.U. fee is $25.00. An Alumni Luncheon will be held during the Conference and luncheon tickets may be purchased when registering. Luncheon tickets are $15.00 each.

Lott Carey Reaches Farther

The reach of Lott Carey will touch sixteen countries by August 2005, according to Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer of Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention. "By the time we gather for our Annual Session in August," says Goatley, "our missional work of evangelism, education and health will reach Australia, Jamaica, Sudan, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Guyana, Liberia, Zambia, Haiti, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Italy, Nigeria, India, and South Africa"

Dr. Goatley has also announced that Lott Carey is collaborating for HIV/AIDS prevention, care and support through the All-Africa Conference of Churches based in Nairobi, Kenya. Through partnership with the All-Africa Baptist Fellowship, headquartered in Kumasi, Ghana, Lott Carey is strengthening theological seminaries all across the African continent. Lott Carey continues to provide relief to families victimized by last year's Caribbean hurricanes in Haiti, Jamaica, and Grenada.

"We are helping survivors of the Indian Ocean tsunami through the Baptist World Alliance for Asian countries and through the All-Africa Conference of Churches for African countries," says Goatley. "In addition to our ongoing mission support around the world, Lott Carey is receiving funds to support tsunami survivors through the end of February. We are collaborating primarily with Baptist communities that are already providing essential medical, physical, and spiritual help. Our assistance will target people at the grassroots level. God is enlarging our field of work and scope of influence in a time of significant challenge and opportunity."

African-American Baptists who were committed to a substantial foreign mission thrust – especially on the African continent founded the Lott Carey movement in 1897. They believed that nothing should distract the church from executing its primary objective of advancing God's mission throughout the world. Since the founding, Lott Carey Foreign Mission Convention has single-mindedly invested in Christian missions around the world.

North Carolina Missionary Baptists have long played a significant part in the work of Lott Carey. The North Carolina connections to Lott Carey are obvious: Dr. J. Michael Sanders, the current President of Lott Carey, is a North Carolina native and Mrs. Colene B. Stanley (of Lake Waccamaw) is the current President of Lott Carey Woman's Auxiliary. The 2005 Annual Session of Lott Carey will be held in Charlotte during the week of August 15-19. Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr. and Friendship Missionary Baptist Church are Lott Carey's hosts.

Contributions for foreign missions from General Baptist State Convention congregations are sent to the Baptist Headquarters in Raleigh to be forwarded to Lott Carey.

BAPTIST Informer

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10 to 12 pages - $100.00/thousand

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Ad specifications

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Eighth page	5.25" x 3.125"

Insertion orders are due the 10th of the month prior to the month ad is to run. They should be faxed to Portia Brandon (919) 831-1526.

For more information call Portia Brandon at (919) 821-7466

Headquarters Wish List

The Executive Secretary-Treasurer has developed a "Wish List" for the Baptist Headquarters and is calling upon Churches and individuals to consider a special donation. "There are a number of small, one-time needs that the Headquarters building has that Churches or individuals could easily provide," says EST Haywood T. Gray. He explains that many of these needs have not been met due to unavailability of funds. "To meet these needs now would mean that we would have to divert funds from missions and that would not be appropriate," Gray says.

The items on the "Wish List" are small and relatively inexpensive. For the most part, the items are needed to replace outdated or broken items still in use at the Headquarters. In a few instances, the needs are for new items to be put into normal use at the Headquarters The EST invites interested persons to contact him at gbscgray@bellsouth.net or call the Baptist Headquarters at 919/821-7466 to discuss the items on the "Wish List."

A Historical Observation: "From Barber to Preacher"

By Dr. Jasper P. Reed
GBSC Historian

As I begin to read the biographical sketch of Dr. J. Ray Butler, I became fascinated with the potential leadership skills of his barber's training and his call to serve the Lord. I was impressed as I began to draw a parallel between his call and the conversation that took place as the Lord talked with the prophet Isaiah (Isaiah 7:20). This passage deals with God's transmission of messages to that generation and us today. When it was necessary for the Lord to send a message, He can use anything or anyone He wants to use. The Today's English Version of the Bible renders the passage as, "When that time comes, the Lord will hire a barber from across the Euphrates – the Emperor of Assyria, he will shave of your beard and the hair of your heads and your bodies." It appears that when the Lord was ready to send our generation a message, He called a barber from Roseboro, North Carolina.

Dr. Jasper **Reed**

This barber, Dr. J. Ray Butler, is a product of the local school district, and the Harris Barber College of Raleigh. He was in Newport News, Virginia when he responded to the call to serve in the army of the Lord. Dr. Butler sought to prepare himself for the journey ahead while attending the First Baptist Church of East End in Newport News. He matriculated at Shaw University, Shaw Divinity School, Southeastern Theological Seminary, and Friendship College at Rock Hill, SC. For his academic pursuits, he received the Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Divinity, Master of Divinity and the Doctor of Divinity degrees. Along the way, McKinley Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi honored him with an LL.D.

Dr. Butler is married to Mrs. Marion Lucas Butler and they are the proud parents of four sons. Two sons live in North Carolina while the other two sons live in Ohio. He has been the Pastor of Churches throughout North Carolina and in Baltimore, Maryland. Currently, he is the pastor of record for fourteen years plus at the United Cornerstone Baptist Church in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

Dr. Butler is very active in the larger community. He has been involved with the Human Relations Commission, the Red Cross, Mental Health Association, United Way, and the Mayor's task forces all in the greater Winston-Salem community.

Dr. Butler has served the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc. in many capacities. He has served the Convention as its vice president-at-large, chairman of the General Board, chaired the Personnel Committee, and is currently the Convention's parliamentarian. He served as moderator of two General Baptist associations. Our subject also found energy and time to serve the National Baptist Convention, USA and the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Convention in several capacities. He has been on Lott Carey's Executive Committee and General Board. He was the featured preacher in the National Baptist Convention USA at least twice.

Dr. Butler still finds time to be a world traveler having visited fourteen countries, preaching in four of them. He has authored two books. During the administrations of North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt, Dr. Butler was appointed a member of the State Board for Licensed Contractors. The "Barber" is still preparing us for the kingdom. God bless him. ■

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Black History Month

Submitted By Portia Brandon, M.Div.
Christian Education Coordinator

Americans have recognized black history annually since 1926, first as "Negro History Week" and later as "Black History Month". What you might not know is that black history had barely begun to be studied – or even documented – when the tradition originated. Although blacks have been in America at least as far back as colonial times, it was not until the 20th century that they gained a respectable presence in the history books.

Portia
Brandon

Blacks Absent from History Books

We owe the celebration of Black History Month, and more importantly, the study of black history, to Dr. Carter G. Woodson. Born to parents who were former slaves, he spent his childhood working in the Kentucky coal mines and enrolled in high school at age twenty. He graduated within two years and later went on to earn a Ph.D. from Harvard. The scholar was disturbed to find in his studies that history books largely ignored the black American population – and when blacks did figure into the picture, it was generally in ways that reflected the inferior social position they were assigned at the time.

On February 1:

Feb. 1, 1926 – What is now known as Black History Month was first celebrated on this date as Negro History Week by Carter G. Woodson. It became a month long celebration in 1976.

Feb. 1, 1902 – Langston Hughes, a famous poet, was born this day in Joplin, MO.

Feb. 1, 1865 – The 13th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which abolished slavery, was adopted by the 38th Congress.

On February 2:

Feb. 2, 1948 – President Truman sent Congress a special message urging the adoption of a Civil Rights program, including the creation of a fair employment practices commission and anti-lynching and anti-poll tax measures.

On February 3:

Feb. 3, 1903 – Jack Johnson wins the Negro Heavyweight title.

Feb. 3, 1920 – The Negro Baseball League is founded.

On February 4:

Feb. 4, 1913 – Rosa Parks (born Rosa Louise McCauley) was born on this day.

Feb. 4, 1971 – National Guard mobilized to quell rioting in Wilmington, N.C. Two persons killed.

On February 5:

Feb. 5, 1866 – Congressman Thaddeus Stevens offered an amendment to Freedmen's Bureau Bill authorizing the distribution of public land and confiscated land to freedmen and loyal refugees in 40-acre lots.

Feb. 5, 1934 – Henry (Hank) "Home Run King" Aaron, baseball superstar, was born.

On February 6:

Feb. 6, 1820 – "Mayflower of Liberia" sailed from New York City with eighty six Blacks. Black population: 1,771,656 (18.4%).

Feb. 6, 1993 – Arthur Ashe dies. First African American tennis player to win at Wimbledon.

On February 7:

Feb. 7, 1926 – Negro History Week originated by Carter G. Woodson is observed for the first time.

On February 8:

Feb. 8, 1944 – Harry S. McAlphin, first African American to be accredited to attend the White House press conference.

Feb. 8, 1986 – Oprah Winfrey becomes the first African American woman to host a nationally syndicated talk show.

On February 9:

Feb. 9, 1944 – Novelist Alice Walker was born in Eatonton, GA.

Feb. 9, 1952 – Author Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man* wins the National Book Award.

Feb. 9, 1971 – Leroy "Satchel" Paige is inducted into the Baseball Hall of Fame.

Feb. 9, 1995 – Bernard Harris, African-American astronaut, takes space walk.

On February 10:

Feb. 10, 1927 – Leontyne Price, who became an internationally acclaimed opera singer, was born in Laurel, Miss.

Feb. 10, 1964 – After 12 days of debate and voting on 125 amendments, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by a vote of 290 – 130.

On February 11:

Feb. 11, 1990 – Nelson Mandela is released from a South African prison after being detained for 27 years as a political prisoner.

On February 12:

Feb. 12, 1909 – The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was founded. The call for the organizational meeting was issued on 100th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth by 47 whites and six blacks.

On February 13:

Feb. 13, 1923 – The first black professional basketball team, "The Renaissance", was organized.

Feb. 13, 1957 – Southern Christian Leadership Conference organized at New Orleans meeting with Martin Luther King, Jr., as president.

On February 14:

Feb. 14, 1817 – Frederick Douglass, "The Great Emancipator", is born.

Feb. 14, 1867 – Morehouse College organized in Augusta, GA. The institution was later moved to Atlanta. New registration law in Tennessee abolished racial distinctions in voting.

Feb. 14, 1936 – National Negro Congress organized at Chicago meeting attended by 817 delegates representing more than 500 organizations.

On February 15:

Feb. 15, 1851 – Black abolitionists invaded a Boston courtroom and rescued a fugitive slave.

Feb. 15, 1968 – Henry Lewis becomes the first black to lead a symphony orchestra in the United States.

On February 16:

Feb. 16, 1970 – Joe Frazier knocks out Jimmy Ellis in the second round of their New York fight and becomes the world heavyweight boxing champion.

On February 17:

Feb. 17, 1870 – Congress passed resolution readmitting Mississippi on condition that it would never change its constitution to disenfranchise blacks.

Feb. 17, 1963 – Michael Jeffrey Jordan, famed basketball player and former minor league baseball player, born in New York, N.Y.

On February 18:

Feb. 18, 1931 – Toni Morrison (born Chloe Anthony Wofford), who will win the Pulitzer Prize for her novel *Beloved*, was born on this day in Lorain, Ohio.

On February 19:

Feb. 19, 1919 – Pan-African Congress, organized by W.E.B. DuBois, met at the Grand Hotel, Paris. There were 57 delegates – 16 from the United States and 14 from Africa as well as others from 16 countries and colonies.

On February 20:

Feb. 20, 1895 – Death of Frederick Douglass. Douglass was the leading black spokesman for almost 50 years. He was a major abolitionist, lecturer, and editor.

On February 21:

Feb. 21, 1895 – North Carolina Legislature, dominated by black Republicans and white Populists, adjourned for the day to mark the death of Frederick Douglass.

Feb. 1, 1965 – Malcolm X assassinated at age 39 in the Audubon Ballroom at a rally of his organization. Three blacks were later convicted of the crime and sentenced to life imprisonment.

On February 22:

Feb. 22, 1898 – Black postmaster lynched and his wife and three daughters shot and maimed for life in Lake City, S.C.

On February 23:

Feb. 23, 1868 – Dr. William Edward Burghardt (W.E.B.) DuBois, educator and civil rights advocate, is born in Great Barrington, Mass.

Feb. 23, 1979 – Frank E. Peterson, Jr. named the first black general in the Marine Corps.

On February 24:

Feb. 24, 1868 – The House of Representatives voted, 126 to 47, to impeach President Andrew Johnson.

On February 25:

Feb. 25, 1870 – Hirman R. Revels of Mississippi was sworn in as first black U.S. Senator and first black Representative in Congress.

Feb. 25, 1948 – Martin Luther King was ordained as a Baptist minister.

Feb. 25, 1964 – Muhammad Ali defeated Sonny Liston for world heavyweight boxing title.

On February 26:

Feb. 26, 1869 – Fifteenth Amendment guaranteeing the right to vote sent to the states for ratification.

Feb. 26, 1926 – Carter G. Woodson started Negro History Week. This week would later become Black History Month.

On February 27:

Feb. 27, 1902 – Marian Anderson, who will become a world-renowned opera singer and the first African-American soloist to perform at the White House, is born in Philadelphia, PA.

Feb. 27, 1988 – Figure skater Debi Thomas becomes the first African American to win a medal (bronze) at the winter Olympic Games.

On February 28:

Feb. 28, 1984 – Musician and entertainer Michael Jackson won eight Grammy Awards. His album, "Thriller", broke all sales records to date and remains one of the top-grossing albums of all time.

Resources: Chronology on History of Slavery and Racism (Eddie Becker)
Timeline of African American History (Library of Congress)

Eight ways to encourage your pastor

simple acts that feed a shepherd

Submitted by
Dr. A.T. Griffey, III
GBSC Statistician.

Sometimes pastors are the loneliest people in the church. Often their hours are long, the pay minimal, the criticism considerable and constant. Feelings of disappointment, discouragement, and defeat may begin to plague the best of them. Paul's admonition to "serve one another in love" (Gal. 5:13) should encourage us to remember our shepherds. Here are eight ways to make their lives better.

Dr. A.T. **Griffey, III**

1. Cut the criticism

A Pastor told his audience, "that the space between someone doing the best he or she can and someone in need is **holy ground**. The Holy Spirit had transformed that feeble sermon for her – and as it turned out, for me too." Unlike most workers who are evaluated once or twice a year, clergy are often critiqued weekly after each worship service. It's not unusual to hear people say "the music was poor", "the hymn selection was awful", or "the sermon was boring". We would do well to remember that most spiritual leaders work hard to make worship a unique celebration each week.

2. Pray regularly

Ask God to shower your pastor with an abundance of love, hope, joy, faith, peace, power, wisdom, and courage. Pray for your spiritual leader's maturity and growth in the faith. As you pray keep in mind this wisdom from German writer Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: "If you treat a person as he is, he will stay as he is; but if you treat him as if he were what he ought to be, he will become what he ought to be and could be."

3. Express appreciation in writing

A spoken compliment is always welcome, but a written one can be read over and over again for years. So, when you hear or see something you like from your minister, write an appreciative note.

4. Use your skills to bless

Are you proficient with computers? Help your pastor master the church's new computer. Are you a mechanic? Offer to service the car free of charge or at a reduced fee. One pastor I know recalls: "I was pastoring my first church – a small congregation with limited resources. While there, I developed a series of dental problems and could not afford treatment. What a joy it was when a dentist in the church offered to treat me for free. Correcting my dental problem involved nearly a dozen visits. He treated me carefully and cheerfully each time. I have thought of that dentist many times since then and the memories of his kindness continue to bless my life."

5. Squelch gossip

If you hear a negative comment, respond with a positive one. If misinformation is being spread, correct it with the accurate information. Or, if people are gossiping, just walk away. Remember the Bible condemns gossip and careless speech. James 1:26 says, "If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself and his religion is worthless." And Psalm 34:13 reads, "Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies."

6. Offer to meet a need

Some people make their spiritual leaders defensive and angry by saying, "You need to…" That approach is seldom welcome and almost always counterproductive. If you see a need, approach your spiritual leader by saying, "I'd like to help by…" If you see an area that can be improved, take responsibility for working on it. Be an active participant in your church. Get involved by teaching a class, leading a workshop, singing in the choir, feeding the hungry. Ask your spiritual leader where and how you can employ your gifts.

7. Be openly responsive

Nothing so animates and excites a spiritual leader as seeing people respond to the preaching and teaching. Imagine the surprise and delight of a pastor in your city, who, when greeting a visitor to our church, found he or she came because of the kindness of a church member who was a neighbor. One pastor's heart filled with joy when a group of women in Washington, D.C., responded to a sermon preached from the words of Jesus – "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matt. 7:1). After hearing the sermon, the women decided to give a baby shower for the young woman who provided childcare while they met for Bible study. She was unmarried, close to going on welfare, and without support from her family or the father-to-be. The young woman was moved to tears by the surprise baby shower. Later, the women explained to the pastor, "Your sermon taught us that it's possible to reach out to someone in need – in this case, an unwed mother – without judging or condoning the situation."

8. Throw away the measuring stick

Don't expect that your present spiritual leaders will do things the same way their predecessors did. Lay aside personal agendas and preferences. Instead, focus on how your leader is being used by God to do effective ministry now. By serving your shepherds, you will ensure that they will not only be encouraged but will feel appreciated and continue to minister with enthusiasm and energy.

A friend is someone who stays with you in the bad weather of life, guards you when you are off your guard, restrains your impetuosity, delights in your wholeness, forgives your failures, does not forsake you when others let you down.

The friendship of Jesus enables us to see others as he saw the apostles: flawed by good children of the Father. ■

• UPCOMING EVENTS •

March 3-4, 2005
Ministers' Council Leadership Summit
Goldsboro, NC

April 5-8, 2005
Annual Evangelism Conference
Chappell Memorial Baptist Church
110 Bradford Drive • Charlotte, NC

April 9, 2005
Laymen's League Mid-Annual One Day Session
First Baptist Church • 101 S. Wilmington St. • Raleigh, NC
(The Banquet will be held on Friday, April 8th at the church)

April 21-23, 2005
GBSC Music Conference
Martin Street Baptist Church
1001 E. Martin Street • Raleigh, NC

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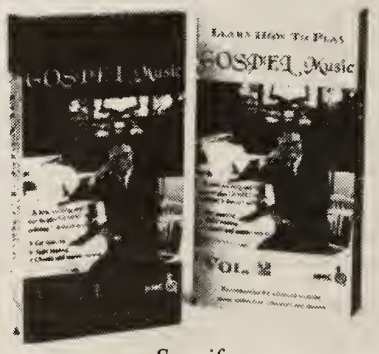

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(PLEASE CONTACT CHURCHES FOR SPECIFIC QUALIFICATIONS SOME REQUIRE 3 OR MORE YEARS PASTORAL EXPERIENCE, SEMINARY TRAINING, MISSIONARY BAPTIST ORDINATION, MUSICAL SKILLS) **(FOR SPECIFIC CHURCH QUALIFICATIONS CONTACT THE PULPIT COMMITTEE)**

MACON SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH, Macon, NC – The pastor search committee is accepting resumes for the position of pastor for 2nd and 4th Sundays of each month. We request that interested applicants reside in a maximum distance of a 30 – 35 mile radius. Applicants must possess the following qualifications and responsibilities.

Qualifications:

Born-again, spirit-filled, ordained and divinely called, with strong family and community values.

Be a licensed, Ordained Baptist Minister.

Must be able to teach Bible Study.

Must be able to work with all age groups.

Strong knowledge of Baptist Doctrines, church policies and procedures.

Experienced as a senior pastor, but will consider an experienced associate pastor.

Must have Spiritual maturity, and be able to preach and teach the Word of GOD.

Willingness to administer communion and perform Baptismal service.

Possess strong and proven administrative experience.

Divinity school degree preferred, but will consider a combination of education and experience.

Responsibilities:

Plan, prepare and deliver sermons.

Visit and commune with sick and shut-in members and bereaved families.

Interested candidates please submit resume to **Ms. Sylvia Dunston, Church Secretary, 1472 Hwy. 401 South, Warrenton, NC 27589, (252) 257-0221.** ■

The Prayer Line

Rev. David K. Miles M.Div.
919-264-9249 9pm - 7am

WAKE BAPTIST GROVE CHURCH
302 E. Main Street • Garner, NC 27529

Wake Baptist Grove Church is currently seeking applications/resumes for the position of **pastor**. Applicants should possess the following qualifications:

Qualifications:

- ✔ Must be a licensed ordained Missionary Baptist Minister.
- ✔ Must be full of the Holy Spirit – led by the spirit of God in all matters.
- ✔ Must be able to preach and teach the word of God.
- ✔ Must be a strong leader and counselor.
- ✔ Must be able to work cooperatively with all church officials and auxiliary heads.
- ✔ Must have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the office of Pastor.
- ✔ Must be association minded.
- ✔ Must be able to supervise paid staff and volunteers.
- ✔ Must be able to organize and lead instructions that will help develop staff and volunteers.
- ✔ A Divinity degree is preferred, however, theological training plus ministerial experience will be given strong consideration.

SUBMIT APPLICATION OR RESUME TO:
Pastoral Search Committee • (Deacon James Hall, Chairman)
Wake Baptist Grove Church • 302 E. Main Street • Garner, NC 27529 • (919) 231-1758

Feb. 2005/1t

Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church • New Bern, NC

Is currently accepting resumes for the position of Pastor. Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church is a member of the Old Eastern Missionary Baptist Association.

Potential Candidate Qualifications:

- Must be led by the Spirit of God in all matters and perform pastoral duties according to the scriptures and the needs of the church.
- Must be ordained and licensed with strong knowledge of the Missionary Baptist doctrines, policies and practices.
- Must be able to conduct worship service on a weekly basis
- Three to five years of prior pastoral experience preferred.
- Seminary degree from an accredited school or equivalent education preferred.
- Ability to teach God's word and carry out administrative, leadership and counseling duties.
- Ability to communicate & work with all age levels. Participate in outreach ministries (including youth & senior ministries)
- Must be family and community oriented.
- Must be a good role model, of moral and ethical conduct.
- Must be able to teach and/or attend Sunday School, bible Study and Prayer Meeting, visit the sick and shut-in and support church functions.
- Must have a vision for the spiritual, intellectual and financial growth of the church.

Along with resume, potential candidate must provide:

- Four references: (2 professional; 2 personal). References should include name, address and telephone number.
- Name, address and telephone of previous or current church affiliation. Please include pastor's name, if applicable.
- Proof of religious credentials (license/ordination).
- Proof of degree for confirmation or transcript of completed courses if degree has not been conferred.
- Provide a mission statement for the church.

This list is certainly not inclusive, but serves as a snapshot of what we expect of a pastor as we build Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church into a church that will serve all of God's children.

If you feel God is leading you to this call, please submit resume to:
Pastoral Search Committee, Mount Calvary Missionary Baptist Church,
Attn: Byron Walston, Co-Chairman, P.O. Box 13041, New Bern, NC
(Deadline: must be postmarked by midnight, February 28, 2005)

ANTIOCH MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH
5046 Antioch Road, Post Office Box 1969 • Oxford, N. C. 27565

The Antioch Missionary Baptist Church is seeking a pastor to serve as its spiritual leader, teacher, counselor and administrator. All interested persons should submit a letter of interest and resume to the Pulpit Committee.

Qualifications:

- Born again Christian • Licensed and Ordained Missionary Baptist Minister
- Strong knowledge of Baptist doctrines, church policies and procedures
- Must have a college and seminary degree from an accredited college or university
- Must have the ability to preach and teach the Bible
- Demonstrate experience in the delivery of well prepared sermons and be able to teach on all levels
- Proficient in church organization • Pastoral experience preferred
- Family oriented • Able to plan and implement innovative youth programs
- Must have good oral and written communication skills

Interested applicants should Mail Resumes to:
Pastoral Search Committee, Attention: Deacon Leonard E. Peace, Sr.
Post Office Box 1969, Oxford, NC 27565

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***For more information or to request resume please contact* (919) 854-4134**

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J.J. JOHNSON BAPTIST ASSEMBLY INFORMATION

The Site:

The J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly is a tract of land comprising seventy-five (75) or more acres, much of which is covered with a mixture of North Carolina Pine, red and white oak trees. The location of the Baptist Assembly is on more than 75 rolling acres in Laurel Hill, North Carolina in Scotland County.

In 1967, approximately two-thirds of the acreage was donated by Dr. and Mrs. Joy J. Johnson and their daughter, Deborah (Mrs. Alexander Killiens). Additional acres were purchased by the Woman's Convention and General Baptist State Convention.

Our Purpose:

The purpose of the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly in Laurel Hill is to provide a setting that is Christian in its atmosphere and is conducive to learning, worship, and meeting the needs of all individuals whom we serve. It seeks to provide opportunities for everyone to learn habits of good citizenship, and it provides at the same time opportunities to reach a maximum potential for Christian fellowship and fun experiences through democratic ideals and living.

The facility exists for the exclusive use by religious groups and/or organizations with similar aims regardless of ethnic origin.

Meeting Facilities:

At the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly, there are various meeting facilities available. Listed below are the seating capacity (theater style) and lodging:

- Rowan Association Chapel — Seating Capacity: 300-400
- Horne Lodge — Seating Capacity: 20-25, Sleeps 12
- Alston Lodge — Seating Capacity: 100, Sleeps 64
- Lumber Bridge Association Lodge — Seating Capacity: 100, Sleeps 64
- Brown Assembly Dining Hall (Cafeteria Style) — Seating Capacity: 200

Individuals should bring their own linen, blankets, soap and other toiletries for the lodging facilities.

"And gathered them out of the lands, from the east, and from the west, from the north, and from the south."
Psalm 107:3

Send Applications & Funds to:
General Baptist State Convention, J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly
603 S. Wilmington Street, Raleigh, NC 27601
(Make checks payable to J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly)

Sources: "1974" Brochure and the J. J. Johnson Baptist Assembly Guide And Handbook (1985).

GBSC UPCOMING SESSIONS

2004 - 2006

YEAR	CITY	HOST
MID-YEAR		
2005	Elizabeth City	St. Stephens
2006	Wilmington	Shiloh
ANNUAL		
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2006	Raleigh	Martin Street
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I have built and designed more than 45 churches in my 55 years of general contracting.

Church building should be compatible with their neighborhoods. The quality of construction, design, and landscaping should create a meaningful setting which is an inspiration to its members and the community.

When you consult with me, my first step is a detailed inquiry of the various programs at your church. This enables me to understand the main focus of your ministry and it helps you understand my services. Our first meeting is to get acquainted and find out your needs.

The second step is providing a master plan of your entire church property and renderings or models of the proposed buildings.

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6. Specifications (in laypersons language)

I have found that coordinating all of these design phases through one firm avoids costly delays, misunderstanding and mistakes during constructions.

There are many phases in church planning and design which require a specialist in that field. When you start your next building program, I hope you will give me a call.

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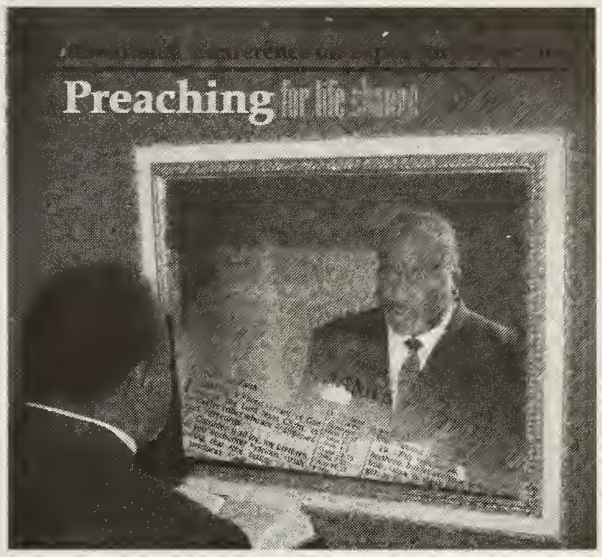

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The Baptist Informer, New and Improved

I have long appreciated the epitaph of Ben Franklin. Here's what young Franklin said he wanted inscribed on his tombstone: *"The body of B. Franklin, Printer (Like the Cover of an Old Book, Its Contents torn Out, And Stript of its Lettering and Gilding) Lies Here, Food for Worms. But the Work shall not be Lost; For it will (as he Believ'd) Appear once More In a New and More Elegant Edition, Revised and Corrected, By the Author."* In some ways, that is my attempt in presenting a new format and design for our Baptist newspaper.

NEW DESIGN: You'll immediately notice a new, more modern design. This is an attempt to make the paper more attractive and interesting. Much appreciation is due to our partners at Benson Newspaper Printing for their hard work to meet my new and many demands. They've been angels!

IMPROVED CONTENT: Articles appearing will be shorter, more concise, and easier to read. The paper will focus more heavily on providing information and updates that our Baptist family can use and discuss.

MORE VARIETY: The same columns won't appear every month. There are so many important events and issues before our Baptist family that we want to be able to spotlight more of them through our paper. I don't want the *Baptist Informer* to be the "same old thing" every month. Changing the content on a regular basis will keep our subscribers anxious to get the paper and will get others interested in subscribing.

MORE FOCUS ON MISSIONS: The purpose of the *Baptist Informer* is to primarily report on and educate our readers about the Convention's mission and promotion of the Convention's program to carry out that mission. The goal is to report more on our work and how the work can be advanced.

ADVERTISING: Better controls on advertising will make this a better paper. It is the intention of the paper to be faithful to advertisers, but we do not wish to run ads beyond their paid advertising time.

WEBSITE LINK: While the *Baptist Informer* is not available in an online version, there will be some articles that will appear on our Website prior to being published in the paper. Visit our Website at www.gbsc.org.

I hope you like what you read this month. I am certain that there will be some who will find the changes hard to swallow. I hope that many more will find the changes to be refreshing. Either way, please feel free to address your comments and criticism to me at gensec@gbsc.org.

By the way, I understand that the preferred epitaph of young Ben Franklin never ended up on his tombstone. Instead, the following is engraved to mark his burial place: *"Benjamin and Deborah Franklin: 1790."* So if my lofty goal of changing and improving this venerated publication of North Carolina's General Baptists fails, please do be kind in whatever epitaph is placed on this good idea's grave. In any event whether my goal and intent survive, I am certain that "the work shall not be lost."

Until next month,

Haywood T. Gray
Executive Editor

BAPTIST Informer
603 S. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601
USPS 042-680

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Packed Raleigh Civic Center Celebrates King Legacy

(see pgs. 10-11 for more photos)

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